DÆMONOLOGIA SACRA:
OR, A
TREATISE
OF
Satans Temptations:

The Second Part.

CONTAINING
The manifold Subtilties and Stratagems of Satan, for the corrupting of the minds of Men with Errour; and for the destruction of the Peace and Comfort of the Children of God.

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PART II.

CHAP. I.

That it is Satan's grand Design to corrupt the Minds of Men with Errour. The Evidences that it is so. And the Reasons of his Endeavours that way.

NExt to Satan's Deceits in *tempting to Sin* and *against Duty*, his design of *corrupting the Minds of Men by Errour* calls for our search; and indeed this is one of his principal endeavours, which takes up a considerable part of his time and diligence. He is not only called in Scripture an *Unclean Spirit*, but also a *Lying Spirit*, and there are none of these cursed qualifications that lie idle in him: as by his Uncleanness we may easily conjecture his attempts upon the Will and Affections to defile them by Lust; so by his Lying we may conclude that he will certainly strive to blind the Understanding by Errour. But a clear discovery of this we may have from these Considerations.

First, From God's interest *in Truth*, in reference to his great designs of *Holiness* and *Mercy* in the World. Truth is a Ray and Beam of him who is the Father of Lights. All *revealed* Truths are but *Copies* and Transcripts of that *Essential*, *Archetypal* Truth. Truth is, the *Rod of his Strength*, Psal. 110. 2. the *Scepter of his Kingdom* by which he doth subdue the hearts of Men to his obedience and service in conversion. Truth is that *Rock* upon which he hath *built his Church*, the foundations are the *Prophets and Apostles*, Eph. 2. 20. that is, the *Doctrine* of the Prophets and Apostles, in

Deus est prima veritas essentialis, Verbum Dei prima veritas normalis. *Mac. Distinc. Theol.* cap. 1.

in the Scriptures of the *Old* and *New Testament.* Truth is that great *depositum* committed to the care of his Church, which is
1 Tim. 3. 15. therefore called the *pillar of Truth:* because as Princes or Rulers put their Proclamations on Pillars for the better information of
Joh. 17. 17. their Subjects, so doth his Church hold out Truth to the World. Holiness is maintained by Truth, our ways are *directed* by it, and by it are we *forewarned* of Satan's Devices. Now the *Prince of Darkness* carrying himself in as full an opposition to the *God of Truth* as he can in all his ways, God's interest in Truth will sufficiently discover the Devil's design to promote Errour; for such is his hatred of God, that (though he cannot destroy Truth, no more than he can tear the Sun out of the Firmament, yet) he will endeavour by *corrupting the Copy,* to *disgrace the Original;* though he cannot *break* Christ's Scepter, yet by raising Errour he would hinder the *encrease* of his Subjects; though he cannot *remove* the Rock upon which the Church is built, he will endeavour to *shake* it, or to *interrupt* the Building, and to *tear down* God's Proclamation from the Pillar on which he hath set it to be *read of all*; and if we can conceive what an *hatred* the *Thief* hath to the Light, as it contradicts and hinders his Designs, we may imagine there is nothing against which the Devil will use greater contrivances than against the light of Truth: He neither can, nor will make a *league* with any, but upon the terms that *Nahash*
1 Sam. 11. 3. propounded to the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*, that is, that he may *put out their right eye,* and so *lay it for a reproach upon the Israel of God.* 'Tis the work of the Holy Spirit *to lead us into Truth*, and by the rule of contraries 'tis the Devil's work *to lead into Errour.*

Secondly, Though the Scripture doth charge the *Sin* and danger of Delusion and Errour upon those Men that *promote* it, to the deception of themselves and others, yet doth it chiefly blame Satan for the great *Contriver* of it, and expresly affirms him to be the grand Deceiver: Instruments and *Engeniers* he must make use of to do him service in that work, but still it is the *Devil* that is a Lying Spirit in their Mouths; 'tis he that teacheth and
Acts 13. 10. prompts them, and therefore may they be called (as *Elymas* was by
πρωτότοκον τῦ Σαλανᾶ *Paul*) the Children of the Devil, or (as *Cerinthus* of old) the first-born of Satan.

The Church of *Corinth*, among other distempers, laboured under dangerous Errours, against which when the *Apostle* doth industriously set himself, he doth chiefly take notice, 1. Of the

false-

false-Teachers who had cunningly wrought them up to an aptitude of declining from the *simplicity of the Gospel*; these he calls *false-Apostles*, as having no commission from God, and *Satan's Ministers*, 2 Cor. 11. 13, 15. thereby informing us who it is that sends them out and imploys them upon this errand. 2. He especially accuseth *Satan* as the great Contriver of all this evil; if any shut their Eyes against the Light, he gives this for the principal cause, that the *God of the World blinded their Minds*: If any stumbled at the simplicity of the Gospel, he presently blames the *subtilty of the old Serpent* for it, 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. When false Doctrine was directly taught, and varnished over with the glorious pretexts of Truth, still he chargeth Satan with it, *Vers.* 14. *No marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of Light*; where he doth not only give a reason of the corrupting or the adulterating the Word of God by false-Apostles, as *Vintners* do their Wines by mixtures, (a Metaphor which he makes use of, *cap.* 2. 17.) that they learned it of Satan, *who abode not in the Truth, but was a Lyar from the beginning*: But also, he further points at Satan, to furnish us with a true account of the ground of that cunning Craft which these deceitful Workers used, while they *metamorphosed* themselves, by an *imitation* of the way and manner, zeal and diligence of the *Apostles of Christ*; they were taught by one who had exactly learned the Art of Imitation, and who could, to all appearance, act to the life the part of *an Angel of Light*. And to take away all objection or wonder, that so many with such seeming earnestness and zeal, should give up themselves to deceive by false-Doctrine: he tells us that this hath been the Devil's work, from the first *beguiling of* Eve, *vers.* 3. and that as he then made use of a *Serpent* for his Instrument, so ever since in all ages he hath made so often, and so much use of *Men* as his Emissaries, that it should now neither seem a *marvel*, nor a *great matter* to see the Devil at this work by his Agents.

2 Cor. 4. 4.

καπηλεύοντα.

οὐ θαυμαστόν. οὐ μέγα. *ver.* 14, 15.

Thirdly, That this is Satan's great design, may be further cleared from the *constant course* of his endeavours. The Parable of the Tares, *Matth.* 13. 25. shews, that Satan is as *busie* in sowing *Tares*, as the Master of the Field is in sowing *Wheat*; that by Tares, not Errors in the *abstract*, but *Men* are to be understood, is evident from the Parable it self; but that which makes *Men* to be *Tares*, is *Sin* and *Errour*: so that in a *complex* sense, we are taught how diligent the Devil, (who is expresly signified by the

the Enemy, *verſ.* 39.) is in that imployment, much of his time hath been taken up that way. *There were falſe Prophets* (ſaith *Peter*, 2 Epiſt. 2. 1.) and *there ſhall be falſe-Teachers*; that is, ſo it was of old, and ſo it will be to the end. The ſhorteſt abſtract of Satan's acts in this matter, would be long and tedious, judge of the reſt by a few inſtances.

In the *Apoſtles times*, how *quickly* had the Devil broached falſe Doctrine? That it was *neceſſary to be circumciſed*, was early taught, *Acts* 15. 1. In *Col.* 2. 8. the vain deceit of *Philoſophy*, *Traditions*, and the *Elements* of the World, (which were the body of *Moſaical* Ceremonies) are mentioned as dangerous Intruſions; and in *verſ.* 18. the *worſhipping of Angels* (as it ſeems) was pleaded for, with no ſmall hazard to the Church. The *denial of the Reſurrection* is expreſsly charged upon ſome of the *Corinthian* Church, 1 *Cor.* 15. 12. and that *the Reſurrection is paſt already*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. is affirmed to have been the Doctrine of *Hymeneus*, *Philetus*, and others; but theſe are comparatively little, to that groſs Errour of *denying Chriſt*, Jud. *v.* 4. or, *that Jeſus is the Chriſt*, 2 Joh. 2. 22. or, *Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh*, 1 Joh. 4. 3. which are branded for *Antichriſtian* Errours, and were boldly aſſerted by many falſe Prophets that were then *gone out into the World*; and to ſuch a height came they at laſt, that they taught the lawfulneſs of *committing Fornication, and to eat things offered to Idols*, Rev. 2. 20. All theſe falſehoods took the boldneſs to appear, before all the Apoſtles were laid in their Graves: And if we will believe what *Auſtin* tells us from *Epiphanius* and *Euſebius*, there were no leſs than *ten* ſorts of *Heretical Antichriſts* in the Apoſtle *John*'s days, the *Simonians*, *Menandrians*, *Saturnilians*, &c. This was an incredible increaſe of falſe Doctrine in ſo *ſhort* a time, and in the times and preachings of the *Apoſtles themſelves*, whoſe power and authority (one would think) might have made Satan *fall before them as lightning*. What progreſs then in this work of deluſion might be expected, when they were all removed out of the World? They left indeed behind them ſad *predictions* of the power of deluſion in after-times, *Of your ſelves ſhall Men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things. After my departing ſhall grievous Wolves enter*, &c. *Acts* 20. 30. *The Spirit ſpeaketh expreſsly, that in the latter times ſome ſhall depart from the Faith*, 1 Tim. 4. 1. and *Paul* (2 Theſſ. 2. 3.) propheſies of a *general* Apoſtacy, upon the revealing of the *Man of Sin*, and the *Myſtery of Iniquity*, and that

De Hæreſ.

that these should be *perilous times*, 2 *Tim*.3.1. To the same purpose, *John* mentions the coming of the *great Antichrist*, as a thing generally known and believed, 1 *Joh*.2.18. But before all these, Christ also had fully forewarned his Servants of *false-Christs*, the power and danger of their delusion, and of the sad revolt from the Faith which should be before his second coming, *Matth*. 24. 24. And as we have *heard*, so have we *seen*, all ages since the Apostles can witness that Satan hath answered the Prophecies that were concerning him: what a strange increase of Errours hath been in the World since that time? *Iræneus* and *Tertullian* made Catalogues long since, after them *Epiphanius*, and *Eusebius* reckoned about *eighty* Heresies; *Austin* after them brings the number to *eighty eight*. Now, though there be just exceptions against the *largeness* of their Catalogues, and that it is believed by many, that there are several branded in their Rolls for Hereticks, that meerly suffer upon the account of their *Name* and *Nation* (for *Barbarism*, *Scythism*, *Hellenism* are mustered in the Front) and others also stand there, for very small matters (as the *quarto decimani*, &c.) and that some ought altogether to be crossed out of their Books; yet still it will appear that the number of Errours is great, and that all those hard names have this general signification, that the Devil hath made a great stir in the World by Errour and Opinon: After times might also be summoned in to speak their evidence, and our own knowledg and experience might without any other help, sufficiently instruct us (if it were needful) of the truth of this, that Errour is one of Satan's great designs.

Secondly, Let us next look into the Reasons which do so strongly engage Satan to these endeavours of raising up Errours. If we set these before us, it will not only confirm us in our belief, that this is one of his main imployments, (for if Errour yield him so many advantages for the ruine of Men, and the dishonour of God, there can be no doubt of his readiness to promote it.) This also may be of use to put us in mind, *who it is* that is at work *behind the Curtain*, when we see such things acted upon the Stage, and consequently may beget a cautious suspition in our Minds against his proceedings; the Reasons are such as these.

First, Errour is *sinful*, so that if Satan should be hindred in his endeavours for any further mischief, than the corrupting of any particular Person, yet he will reckon, that he hath not altogether lost his labour. Some Errours, that overturn *fundamentals* of

Faith,

Faith, are as *deadly poyson*, and called expresly *damnable* by the *Apostle*, 2 Pet. 2. 1. These Heresies are by *Paul*, Gal. 5. 20. recounted among the *works of the Flesh*, of which, he positively affirms, that *they that do such things cannot inherit the Kingdom of God:* Those that are of a lower nature, that do not so *extreamly* hazard the Soul, can only be capable of this Apology, that they are *less evil*; yet as they are oppositions to Truth (propounded in Scripture for our belief and direction) they cease not to be Sins, though they may be greater or less evils, according to the *importance* of those Truths which they deny, or the *consequences* that attend them; and if we go yet a step lower, to the consideration of those *rash* and bold assertions, about things not *clearly revealed*; though they may possibly be true, yet the positiveness of avouchments and determinations in such cases, where we want sufficient reason to support what we affirm, (as that of the *Pseudo-Dionysius* for the *Hierarchy of Angels*, and some *adventurous* assertions concerning God's *secret Decrees*, and many other things of like nature) are by the Apostle, *Col.* 2. 18. most *severely* taxed for an unwarrantable and unjust presumption, in setting *our foot* upon *God's right*; as if such Men would by violence thrust themselves into that which God hath reserved for himself, (for so ἐμβατεύειν. much the word *intruding* imports,) the cause of this he tells us, is the *arrogancy* of corrupt Reason, the *fleshly Mind*, (suitable to that expression, *Matth.* 16. 17. *Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it*;) the bottom of it is *Pride*, which swells Men to this height; and the Fruit (after all these swelling attempts) is no other than (as the Apples of *Sodom*) Dust and *Vanity*, *intruding into those things which he hath not seen, Vainly puft up by his fleshly Mind:* If then Satan do but gain this, that by Errour (though not diffused further than the breast of the infected Party) Truth is *denied*, or that the heart be *swelled* into Pride and Arrogancy, or that he hath hope so to prevail, 'tis enough to encourage his attempts.

Secondly, But Errour is a Sin of an *encreasing* nature, and usually stops not at one or two Falshoods, but is apt to *spawn* into many others, (as some of the most *noxious* Creatures have the most *numerous* Broods:) for one Errour hath this mischievous danger in it, that it *taints* the Mind to an *instability* in every Truth; and the *bond of stedfastness* being once broken, a Man hath no certainty where he shall stay: as a wanton Horse once turned loose, may wander far. This hazard is made a serious warning against

Errour,

Errour, 2 *Pet*. 3. 17. *Beware lest ye being led away with the errour of the Wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.* One Errour admitted, makes the heart unsteady; and besides this inconvenience, Errour doth unavoidably *branch* it self *naturally* into many more, as *Inferences* and Conclusions resulting from it, as Circles in Water multiply themselves; grant *but one absurdity and many will follow upon it*, so that 'tis a Miracle to find a *single* Errour. These *Locusts* go forth by *Bands*, as the experience of all ages doth testify, and besides the *immediate* consequences of an Errour, which receive Life and Being together with it self, as *Twins* of the same Birth. We may observe a *tendancy* in Errours, to *others* that are more *remote*, and by the *long stretch* of multiplyed inferences, those things are *coupled* together that are not very *contiguous*. If the *Lutherans* ('tis * Dr. *Prideaux* his observation) *admit Universal Grace, the* Huberians *introduce Universal Election, the* Puccians *Natural Faith, the* Naturalists *explode Christ and Scriptures* at *last* as unnecessary: this is then a fair mark for the Devil to aim at, if he prevails for one Errour, 'tis an hundred to one but he prevails for more.

ἑνὸς δοθέντος ἀτόπου, τ᾽ ἄλλα πολλὰ συμβαίνει.

* Si *Wittenbergenses* admittant universalem gratiam, *Huberiani* introducent universalem electionem, *Pucciani* fidem naturalem, naturalistæ explodent Christum & Scripturas. *Prid. Lect*. 3. p. 34.

Thirdly, Satan hath yet a further reach in promoting Errour, he knows 'tis a *Plague* that usually infects all *round about*, and therefore doth he the rather labour in this work, because he hopes thereby to corrupt others, and infected Persons are commonly the most busie Agents (even to the *compassing of Sea and Land*) *to gain Prosilytes* to their false Perswasions. This *Harvest* of Satan's labour, is often noted in Scripture, *they shall deceive many*, Matth. 24. 24. *Many shall follow their pernicious ways*, 2 Pet. 2. 2. How quickly had this Leaven spread it self in the Church of *Galatia*, even to *Paul*'s wonder? *Gal*. 1. 6. *I marvel, that you are so soon removed from him, that called you into the grace of Christ, into another Gospel.* Instances of the spreading of Errour are frequent. *Pelagianism* rose about the Year 415, but presently spread it self in *Palestine*, *Africa*, *Greece*, *Italy*, *Sicily*, *France*, and *Britain*. *Arrianism*, like fire in Straw, in a little time brought its flame over the Christian World, and left her *wondring at her self*, that she was so suddenly become *Arrian*. *Socinianism* had the like prevalency; *Lælius* privately had sowed the Seeds, and after his death *Faustus Socinus* his Nephew did so bestir himself, that within *ten years* (after his confident appearing) whole Congregations in *Sarmatia* submitted themselves to his Dictates, as *Calovius* affirms, and within

Consid. Th. Soc. Proemial. p. 65.

within *twenty* or *thirty* Years more ſeveral *hundreds* of Churches in *Tranſilvania* were infected, and within a *few Years* more, the whole *Synod* was brought over to ſubſcribe to *Socinianiſm*. We have alſo inſtances nearer home, after the Reformation, in the raign of *Edward* the *ſixth*, how ſoon did *Popery* return in its full ſtrength when Queen *Mary* came to the Crown? which occaſioned *Peter Martyr* (when he ſaw young Students flocking to Maſs) to ſay, *That the tolling of the Bell overturned all his Doctrine at* Oxford. And of late we have had the ſad experience of the power of Errour to infect, no Errour ſo abſurd, ridiculous, or blaſphemous, but (once broached) it preſently gained conſiderable numbers to entertain it.

Hæc una notula omnem meam doctrinam evertit.

Fourthly, Errour is alſo eminently ſerviceable to Satan for the bringing in *Diviſions*, *Schiſms*, *Rents*, *Hatreds*, *Heart-burnings*, *Animoſities*, *Revilings*, *Contentions*, *Tumults*, *Wars*, *and whatſoever bitter Fruits*, *breach of Love*, *and the malignity of Hatred can poſſibly produce*. Enough of this might be ſeen in the Church of *Corinth*, the diviſions that were amongſt themſelves were occaſioned by it, and a great number of evils the Apoſtle ſuſpected to have been already produc'd from thence, as *Debates*, *Envyings*, *Wraths*, *Strifes*, *Back-bitings*, *Whiſperings*, *Swellings*, *Tumults*, 2 *Cor*. 12. 20. He himſelf eſcaped not from being evilly intreated, by thoſe among them that were turned from the ſimplicity of the Goſpel: The quarrelſome exceptions that they had raiſed againſt him, he takes notice of: They charged him with levity, in neglecting his promiſe to come to them, 2 *Cor*. 1. 17. They called him *carnal*, one that *walked according to the fleſh*, chap. 10. 2. they taunted him as a contemptible Fellow, *ver*. 10. They undervalued his Miniſtry, which occaſioned (not without great Apology) a commendation of himſelf; nay, they ſeemed to call him a falſe Apoſtle, and were ſo bold as to challenge him for a *proof of Chriſt ſpeaking in him*, 2 *Cor*. 13. 3.

If the Devil had ſo much advantage from Errour that was but in the *bud*, and that in *one* Church only; what may we imagine hath he done by it, when it broke out to an open *flame* in *ſeveral* Churches? What work do we ſee in Families when an Errour creeps in among them? *the Father riſeth up againſt the Son, the Son againſt the Father, the Mother againſt the Daughter, the Daughter againſt the Mother*: what ſad divided Congregations have we ſeen? what Fierceneſs, Prejudices, Slanders, Evil-ſurmiſes, Cenſurings, and Diviſions hath this brought forth? what

bandying

bandying of Parties against Parties, Church against Church, hath been produced by this Engine? How sadly hath this poor *Island* felt the smart of it, the bitter contests that have been betwixt *Presbyterian* and *Independent*, betwixt them and the *Episcopal*? makes them look more like factious Combinations, than Churches of Christ. The present differences betwixt Conformists and Nonconformists (if we take them, where they are lowest) they do daily produce such effects, as must needs be very pleasing and grateful to the Devil, both Parties mutually objecting Schism, and charging each other with Crime and Folly; what invectives and railings may be heard in all Companies? as if they had been at the greatest distances in point of Doctrine. But whosoever loseth, to be sure the Devil gains by it. Hatreds, Strife, Variance, Emulations, Lyings, Railings, Scorn and Contempt, are all against the known duty of *brotherly kindness*, and are undoubted provocations against the God of Love and Peace: What can we then think of that can be so useful to Satan as Errour, when these abovementioned evils are the inseparable products of it? The modestest Errours that ever were among good Men are still accompanied with something of these bitter Fruits. The differences about Meats and Days (when managed with the greatest moderation) made the *Strong to despise the Weak*, as silly, wilful, factious Humorists; and on the contrary, the *Weak judged the Strong*, as prophane, careless, and bold Despisers of divine Institutions, for so much the Apostle implyes, *Rom.* 14. 3. *Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth.* But should we trace Errour thorow the *ruines* of Churches, and view the *slaughters* and bloodshed that it hath occasioned; or consider the *Wars* and Desolations that it hath brought forth, we might heap up matter fit for Tears and Lamentations, and make you cease to wonder that Satan should so much concern himself to promote it.

Fifthly, The greatest and most successful Stratagem for the hindering a *Reformation*, is that of raising up an Army of Errours. Reformation of Abuses, and corruptions in Worship or Doctrine, (we may well suppose) the Devil will withstand with his utmost might and Policy, because it endeavours to pull that down which cost him so much labour and time to set up, and so crosseth his end. They who are called out by God to *jeopard their lives in the high places of the Field*, undertake an hard task in endeavour- Judg. 5. 18.

ing to check the power of the Mighty, whose interest it is to maintain those defilements, which their *Policy* hath introduced, to fix them in the possession of that grandeur and command which so highly gratifies their Humours, and self-seeking aspiring Minds: But Satan knowing the strength of that Power, which hath raised them up to oppose, with spiritual resolution, the current of Prevailing Iniquity, usually provides himself with this reserve, and comes upon *their backs* with a *Party* of deluded erronious Men raised up from among themseves, and by this means he hopes either to *discourage* the Undertakers for Reformation, by the difficulty of their work (which must needs drive on heavily, when they that should assist prove hinderers,) or at least to *straiten* and limit the success: For by this means (1.) He *divides the Party*, and so weakens their hands. (2.) He *strengthens their Enemies*, who not only gather heart from these divisions (seeing them so fair a prognostick of their ruine,) but also improve them, by retorting them as an argument, that they are all out of the way of Truth. (3.) The erroneous Party in the *Rear* of the Reformers, do more *gall them* with their Arrows (even bitter words of cursed reviling,) and more hazard them with their Swords and Spears of opposition, than their Adversaries in the *Front* against whom they went forth. In the mean while, they that stand up for Truth, are as Corn betwixt two Milstones, oppressed with a double conflict, beset before and behind.

This hath been Satan's method in all ages. And indeed Policy it self could not contrive any thing that would more certainly obstruct Reformation than this. When the Apostles (who in these last days were first sent forth) were imployed to reform the World, to throw down the Ceremonies of the *Old Testament*, and Heathen Worship, Satan had presently raised up *Men of corrupt Minds* to hinder their Progress; what work these made for *Paul* at *Corinth*, and with the *Galatians*, the *Epistles* to those Churches do testify. The business of these Men was to draw Disciples after them from the *simplicity* of the Gospel, nay *to another Gospel*; and this they could not do but by setting up themselves, boasting of the Spirit, carrying themselves *as the Apostles of Christ*, and contemning those that were really so, insinuating thereby into the affections of the seduced, as if they *zealously affected* them, and that *Paul* was but *weak* and *contemptible*, nay their very *Enemy for telling them the truth*. What unspeakable hindrance must this be

to

to *Paul?* What grief of heart? What fear and jealouſie muſt this produce? he profeſſeth he was affraid leſt he had *beſtowed upon them labour in vain*, Gal. 4. 11. And that he did no leſs than *travel of them in birth the ſecond time*; verſ. 19. If *one Alexander* could do *Paul* ſo much Evil, by *withſtanding his Words*, that he complains of 2 Tim. 4. 14.
him, and cautions *Timothy* againſt him. If *one Diotrephes*, by *prating* againſt *John* with *malicious Words*, prevailed with the Church, that they *received not him, nor the Brethren*; What hurt might a Multitude 3 Jo. *verſ.* 10.
of ſuch be able to do?

In the *Primitive* times of the Church, after the Apoſtles days; when thoſe Worthies were to conteſt with the *Heathen* World, the *Serpent caſt out of his mouth water, as a flood, after the Woman*: (which moſt interpret to be a Deluge of Hereſies: And ſome particularly underſtand it of the *Arrian* Hereſie) that he might hinder the progreſs of the Goſpel. Which deſign of his did ſo take, that many complaints there were, of hindring the Converſion of the *Heathens*, by the Errours that were among Chriſtians. *Epiphanius* tells us, That *Pagans* refuſed to come near the *Chriſtians*, and would not ſo much as hear them ſpeak, being affrighted by the wicked practices and wayes of the *Priſcilianiſts*. *Auſtin* complains to the ſame purpoſe, That looſe, and laſcivious Hereticks adminiſtred matter of Blaſpheming to the idolatrous *Heathens*.

In after-times, when Religion grew ſo corrupt by *Popery*, that God extraordinarily raiſed up *Luther*, *Calvin*, and others in the *Fifteenth*, and *Sixteenth Centuries*; to diſcover thoſe Abominations, and to bring back his People from *Babylon*. The Devil gave them no ſmall trouble by a growth of Errours, ſo that they were forced to Fight againſt the *Papiſts before*, and thoſe *Philiſtines behind*; inſomuch, that Reformation attained not that height and univerſality, which might rationally have been expected from ſuch bleſſed undertakings. This was the conjecture of many, particularly of our Country-man, Dr. *Prideaux*, That if theſe *Fanatick Enthuſiaſts* (which with ſo great a ſcandal to the Goſpel then brake forth) *had not retarded and hindred thoſe glorious proceedings; that Apocalyptical Beaſt of* Rome, *had been not only weakned and wounded, but utterly overthrown and ſlain.* In particular Cities, where any of the faithful Servants of Chriſt endeavoured to detect the Errours of *Popery*, theſe inſtruments of Satan were ready to joyn with the common Adverſary in reproaches and diſturbances: How they oppoſed *Muſculus* at *Auguſta*; and with what fierceneſs they called him *Viper*, *falſe*

Excitata a *Luthero* beſtia Apocalyptica & non irritata tantum ſed ſauciata multorum venabulis, ultinium fere omnium bonorum judicio, effiaſſet Spiritum niſi ſpiritus iſti inauſpicati tam heroicos diſtraxiſſent & retardaſſent impetus. *Prid.* Orat. de Spir. Seduct. *pag.* 95.

false Prophet, *Woolf in sheeps cloathing*, &c. you may see in those that write his Life. How these Men hindred the Gospel at *Limburg*, against *Junius*; At *Zurich*, against *Zuinglius*; At *Ausburg*, against *Urbanus Regius*; you may also see in their Lives. In all which, and others of like nature, you will still find, (1) That there was *never* a Reformation begun, but there were *erroneous* Persons to *hinder* and distract the Reformers. (2) That these Men expressed *as great hatred* against the *Reformers*, and oftentimes more, than against the *Papists*: and were as spitefully bitter in Lies, Slanders, and Scorns against them, as the *Papists* themselves.

Melch. Adam. *in vita* Theol.

Sixthly, Satan can also make use of Errour, either to *fix* Men in their present mistaken wayes, and *careless* course; or as a temptation to *Atheism*; Varieties of Opinions and Doctrines, do amuse, and amaze Men; while one cryes, *Lo here is Christ*, And another, *Lo he is there*. Men are so confounded, that they do not know what to *chuse*. 'Tis one of the greatest difficulties to *single* out Truth, from a *croud* of specious confident pretences; especially, seeing Truth is *modest*, and oftentimes *out-noised* by *clamorous* bold Errour: yea, sometimes *out-vyed* by the *pretensions* of Spirit, and Revelation, in an Antiscriptural falshood. At what a loss is an unskilful Travellour, where so many wayes meet? while one party cries up this, another that, mutually charging one another with Errour. They, whose hearts are any thing *loosened* from a sence and reverence of Religion, are easily tempted to *disbelieve* all. Thus Errour leads to *Atheisme*, and layes the Foundation for all those slanderous exceptions against Scripture, by which Godless Men usually justifie themselves in their Religion. Now, though all wicked Men are not brought to this, because the Consciences of some, do so strongly retain the sentiments of a Deity, that all Satans Art can not obliterate those Characters; yet, the consideration of the *multitude* of Errours doth rivet them in the perswasion of the Truth, and goodness of *that way* of Religion, wherein they had been Educated. *Papists* are hardned by this; and though they have no reason to boast of their *unity* among themselves, as they have been often told; and now of late, by Dr. *Stillingfleet*: (who hath manifested, that their Divisions among themselves, are as great, and managed with as great Animosity, as any amongst us;) yet are their Ears so beaten with the Objection of Sects and Schisms elsewhere, that they are generally confirmed to stay where they are. Besides, this is a stumbling-block which the Devil throws in the way

Discourse of the Idolatry of the Church of *Rome*.

way of poor *Ignorant* People; if they are urged to a serious strictness in Religion, they are *affrighted* from it, by the consideration of *Sects* and parties, and the woful *miscarriages* of some erronious Persons, that at first pretended to strictness; imagining, that strictness in Religion, is an unnecessary dangerous thing; and that the sober godly Christians, are but a company of giddy, unsetled, conceited, precise Persons, who will in a little time run themselves into madness and distraction; or into despair. And thus out of *fear of Schism* or Errour, they dare not be *Religious* in good *earnest*; but content themselves with *drawing near to God with their mouthes*, and *confessing him with their lips, whilst their hearts are far from him*, and *in their works they deny him.*

There is such a propensity in the hearts of Men, to be staggered by the multitude and boldness of Errours, that the *Apostle Paul* expresseth a sence of it, and seems tenderly careful to avoid that blow, (which he knew Satan would readily give through that consideration) by the *apology* that he makes for God, in his holy, wise, providential Permission of them, 1 *Cor.* 11. 19. *There must be Heresies among you.* His intent, is not barely to put them off with this; *That Heresies are unavoidable*; but to satisfie them, that there is a *necessity* of them: and that they are *useful*, as God's *Furnace* and *Fan*, to purifie and to cleanse, that *they which are approved, may be made manifest.* The like care he hath, in 2 *Tim.* 2. 19, 20. upon the mention of the Errour of *Hymeneus*, and *Philetus*, where he obviateth the offence that might arise, by reason of their *Apostacy*: partly by removing the *fears* of the Upright, in affirming their safety, whatever became of other Men, seeing *the Foundation of God standeth sure*: and partly, by declaring it, no more suitable or dishonourable for God to permit the rise of Errours in his Church, than for great Men to have in their houses, *not only Vessels of Gold and Silver, but also of Wood and of Earth*; *some to honour, and some to dishonour.* By these very Apologies, it appears, That Satan by this device of Errour, designs to shake Mens Faith, and to drive them from their Religion.

Seventhly, Neither can this, *that corrupt Doctrines bring forth corrupt Practices*, be of any less weight with Satan; or less engageing, for the pursuit of this Design, than any of the fore-mentioned reasons.

Corrupt Doctrines are imbraced as the *very truth* of God by the Deluded; and one way or other, *directly*, or *consequentially* they lead

on

on *Practice*; and that with the highest security, and confidence; as if they were very Truths indeed.

The Devil then hath this great advantage by Errour; That if he can but corrupt the minds of Men; especially in the more *weighty* and Fundamental Points of Religion: then by a great ease, and without any more labour, he hath gained them to the *practice* of whatsoever these *corrupted* Principles will *lead* unto. No course can be taken, that with greater expedition and prevalency, can introduce profane Debaucheries than this. Thus he conquers *Parties* and *Multitudes*, as a victorious General takes Cities, and whole Countries by *Surrender*: whereas his particular Temptations to Sin, are but inconsiderable, less successful, *picqueerings* in comparison: and when he hath once corrupted the *understandings* of Men, he hath by that means, a command over their *Consciences*; and doth not now urge to Evil, in the notion of *a Devil*, or tempter; but as an *Angel of Light*, or rather as an *Usurper* of Divine Authority: he requires, he commands these wicked Practices, as *necessary Duties*; or at least, gives a liberty therein, as being harmless allowances. This difference was of old observed in Satans management of Persecution, and Errour; that in the former, he did *compel* Men to deny Christ: but by the latter, he did *teach* them.

In persecutione cogit homines negare Christum, nunc docet.

That the *Lives* and Practices of Men, are so concerned by *corrupt Doctrines*, may appear to any, that are but indifferently acquainted with Scripture, or History. We are told by the Apostle *Paul*, That *Faith* and *Conscience* stand so related to each other, that they live and die together; and that when the one is *Shipwracked*, the other is *Drown'd* for company. In *Phil.* 3. 2. he seems severely harsh against those of the *Concision*, he calls them Dogs, *Beware of Dogs*; *beware of evil Workers*. The reason of which expression, (I apprehend) lyes not so much in these resemblances, That Dogs *spoyl* the Flock, by *devouring*; or that they are *fawning* Creatures: or that they are *industrious* in prosecution of their Prey: (though in all these particulars, false Teachers may be compared to Dogs; for they spare not the Flock, they compass Sea and Land, to gain Disciples, and they intice them with fair speeches:) but rather, he intends the similitude, to express the *prophane Life*, and carriage of these Seducers; for Dogs are *filthy* creatures, to a Proverb, *The Dog to his vomit*. And common Prostitutes, for their uncleanness, were called *Dogs*, in the *old Testament*. So some expound, *Deut.* 23. 18. The *hire of a Whore, or the price*

1 Tim. 1. 19.

price of a Dog. And we have full and clear descriptions of Seducers, from their wicked and abominable Practices. 2. *Pet.* 2. 10. *They that walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and despise Government; Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of Dignities.* Vers. 14. *Having eyes full of Adultery, and that cannot cease from Sin: an heart exercised with covetous Practices; cursed Children.* Vers. 18. *They allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness.* — Jude *vers.* 4. *There are certain Men crept in unawares, who were before of old, ordained to this condemnation; ungodly Men, turning the Grace of God into Lasciviousness.* Vers. 16. *These are Murtherers, Complainers, walking after their own Lusts,* &c. 2. Tim. 3. vers. 2, 3, 4, 5. *Men shall be lovers of their own selves; Coveteous, Boasters, Proud, Blasphemers, disobedient to Parents, Unthankful, Unholy, without natural Affection, Truce-breakers, false Accusers, Incontinent, Fierce, despisers of those that are Good, Traitors, Heady, high-minded, lovers of Pleasures, more than lovers of God: of this sort are they which creep into Houses.*——All which, do set forth Heretical Persons as the most scandalous wicked Wretches that we shall meet with: grosly filthy in themselves, corrupted in all the Duties of their Relations, natural, and civil; defiled in all the ways of their converse with Men.

Neither are these wicked practices issuing from gross Errours, to be looked upon as rare, accidental, or *extraordinary* effects thereof, but as the natural and *common* fruits of them: for Christ makes this to be the very *special* property and note, whereby false Prophets may be discovered. *Matth.* 7. 16. *Ye shall know them by their Fruits: Do Men gather Grapes of Thornes, or Figs of Thistles?* &c. These Fruits, were not their *Doctrines*, but their *Lives*: (for to know *false Prophets* by *false Doctrines* is no more, than to know *false Doctrine* by *false Doctrine.*) If any object, That many false Teachers appeared in the shape of *seeming Holiness*, and strictness of Life; they may be answered, from Christ's own words: for there he tells us, (to avoid mistakes) That their *first appearance*, (and it may be the *whole Lives* of some of the *first* Seeds-men of any Errour) is under the form of *Sanctity*: *They come to you in Sheeps-cloathing*; In an outward appearance of Innocency, and plausible pretences: but then he adds, that their *Fruits* afterward will discover them. A Tree at its first Planting, is not discovered what it is; but give it time to grow to its proper fruitfulness, and then you may know of what kind it is: so that we need not affirm, That damnable

Doctrines produce wicked Lives *in all* that entertain them at the *very first*; 'tis enough for discovery, if there be a *natural*, consequential tendency in such Doctrines, to *practical Impieties*; or that *at last*, they produce them, though not in all, yet in many.

And that this matter hath been always found to be so, all History doth confirm. Such there were in the Apostles dayes, as is evident, by their complaints. Such there were in the Church of *Pergamos*, Rev. 2. 14. *Thou hast them that hold the Doctrine of* Balaam; *who taught* Balak *to cast a stumbling-block before the Children of* Israel; *to eat things sacrificed unto Idols, and to commit Fornication.* There were also, the *Nicolaitans*, of whom Christ declares his abhorrency. *Vers.* 15. In the Church of *Thyatira*, there was the *woman Jezebel, who taught and seduced many* of that Church, to the like abominable Doctrines and Practices. *Vers.* 20. Besides these, the *Apostle John* was troubled with the abominable *Gnosticks*. The filthy *Carpocratians*, who taught, That Men *must sin*, and do the will of all the Devils, or else they *could not evade* Principalities and Powers; who would *no otherwise* be pleased to suffer them to escape to the *Superiour* Heavens. Of these Men, and their licencious Doctrine doth he speak, 1 *John.* 3. 6. *&c.* that *they that are born of God* indeed, must not, dare not, *cannot* give themselves up to a liberty in such Abominations.

The same Fruits of corrupt Doctrine appeared after the Apostles dayes. What was *Montanus* but an impure wretch? What were his two companion Prophetesses, *Priscilla*, and *Maximilla*, but infamous Adulteresses? The *Priscillianists*, the *Manichees*, and abundance more, left the stink of their Prophaneness behind them; by reason of whom, (according to *Peters* Prophesie, 2 *Pet.* 2. 2.) *the way of Truth was evil spoken of.*

Later times have also given in full evidence of this Truth. How shameful and abominable were the Lives of *John* of *Leyden*, and the rest of those *German Enthusiasts?* Who reads the story of *Hacket*, and *Coppinger*, without detestation of their wicked Practices? What better have the *Familists*, and Libertines of *New* and *Old England* been? some were turned off to highest *Ranting*, in all Prophaneness of Swearing, Drinking, Adultery, and the defying of a godly Life: and this, under the *unreasonable boast* of Spirit and Perfection. The Heavens may blush, and the Earth be astonished at these things! But in the mean time, Satan huggs himself in his success; and encourageth himself to further attempts in

See the Story of Mr. *Copp.*

in propagating Errour, seeing it brings in so great an harvest of Sin.

Eighthly, In this Design of false-Doctrine, Satan is never altogether out: if he cannot thus defile their Lives, yet 'tis a thousand to one, but he *obstructs their Graces* by it. What greater hinderance can there be to Conversion, than Errour? The word of Truth is the means by which God, through his Spirit, doth beget us; 'tis part of that Image of God that is implanted in us: 'tis God's Voice to the Soul, to awaken it. It cannot then be imagined that God will give the honour of that work to any Errour: neither can Truth take place, or have its Effect upon a Soul *fore-stalled* with a contrary falshood. Falshood in possession, will keep Truth at the door. Neither is Conversion only hindred, by such Errours as directly contradict converting Truths; but also by *Collateral non-fundamental Errours*. As they fill the Minds of Men with *prejudice* against those that profess another Perswasion; so that for their own beloved Errours-sake, Men will not entertain a warning, or conviction from those that dissent from their Opinions: they first account them *Enemies*, and then they *despise* their Message. 'Tis no small matter in Satans way, to have such an obstruction at hand, in the grand concern of Conversion. Yet this is further serviceable to him, to hinder, or weaken the Graces of the Converted already: if he can set God's Children a *madding* upon Errour, or make them fond of *Novelties*; he will by this means *exhaust* the vigour and strength of their Hearts; so that the *substantials* of Religion will be neglected. For as hurtful Plants *engross* all the moisture and fatness of the Earth where they stand, and impoverish it into an inability, for the nourishment of those that are of greater worth: So doth Errour possess it self of the *strength* of the Spirit; and in the mean time, *neglected* Graces dwindle into emptiness, and *fade as a Leaf*. The most curious *Questions and* Opinions that are, contribute nothing to the *Establishment* of the Heart; 'tis only Grace that doth that. *Heb.* 13. 9. *The heart is established with Grace*, and not with disputes about *Meats*: nay, they do Grace a prejudice, in that they make it *sick* and languishing: for to that sence is the *Original*, in 1 *Tim.* 6. 4. *Doting about Questions*, or growing diseased, because of the earnest prosecution of Opinions. Νοσῶν περὶ ζητήσεις.

Ninthly, Errour hath yet another mischief in it, which makes it not a little desirable to Satan; and that is the *judgment*, or punishment

nishment that it brings. So that it every way answers the Devils hatred against both Soul and Body. The blessings of *Prosperity* and *Peace* do attend the Triumphal Chariot of *Truth*. Psal. 85. 11, 12. *Truth shall spring out of the Earth, and Righteousness shall look down from Heaven.* And then it follows, That *the Lord shall give that which is good, and our Land shall yield her increase.* But on the contrary, Errour doth more *provoke* God than Men are aware. How often did God desolate the *Israelites*, set a fire in their Cities, and gave them into the hands of their Enemies, because of their changing the Truth of God into a lye; and worshipping and serving the *Creature more than the Creator?* God left not the Church of *Pergamos*, and *Thyatira* without severe Threatnings for the Errour of the *Nicolaitans*. Rev. 2. 16. *Repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly.* Vers. 22. *I will cast them into great tribulation, except they repent of their Deeds, and I will kill her children with death.* And accordingly, God fulfilled his threatning upon them, by bringing in the *Saracens* to desolate them, and to possess their Land: as he also brought the *Goths* upon the *Empire*, for the *Arrian* Heresie. How is Satan pleased to labour in a Design that will kindle the Wrath of the Almighty?

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Advantages which Satan hath, and useth, for the Introduction of Errour. As, (1.) From his own Power of Spiritual Fascination. That there is such a Power, proved from Scripture, and from the Effects of it. (2.) From our imperfection of Knowledg; the particulars thereof explained. (3.) From the byass of the Mind. What things do byas it; and the power of them to sway the Understanding. (4.) From Curiosity. (5.) From Atheistical Debauchery of Conscience.

THat Satan may the better speed in his design, he carefully takes notice of, and diligently improves all advantages. Indeed all his Stratagems are advantages taken against us, (for so the Apostle in his caution to the *Corinthians* calls his devices, lest Satan should get an *advantage* of us, 2 *Cor.* 2. 11.) but here, I only understand those that are more *general*, which are the grounds and encouragements to his particular Machinations against Men, and which also direct him in his procedure. These are

First, Satan's own power of *Spiritual Fascination*, by which he infatuates the *minds* of Men, and deludes them, as the *external senses* are deceived by Inchantments or *Witchcraft*.

That Satan is a cunning Sophister, and can put Fallacies upon the Understanding; that by subtile objections or arguments he can obtrude a falshood upon the belief of the unskilful and unwary; that he can betray the judgment by the affections, are things of common practice with him. But that which I am now to speak of, is of an higher nature, and though it may (probably) take in much of his common method of ordinary delusion, yet in this it differs, (at least) that 'tis more *efficacious* and prevalent; for as his power over the children of disobedience is so great, that he can *lead them captive at his will*, (except when he is countermanded by the Almighty,) so hath he (by special commission)

a power to lead those to Errour *effectually*, (without missing his end) that have prepared themselves for that spiritual judgment by a special provocation ; and for ought we know, as he hath an *extraordinary power* which he exerts at such times, so may he have an *extraordinary method* which he is not permitted to practise daily, nor upon all.

That such a power as this the Devil hath, is believed by those, whose learning and experience have made their judgments of great value with serious Men ; and thus some do describe it, *'Tis a delusion with a kind of Magical Inchantment* ; so *Calvin : a Satanical operation whereby the senses of Men are deluded* ; thus *Perkins :* who after he had asserted that Satan can corrupt the Fantasy or Imagination, he compares this Spiritual Witchcraft to *such diseases* of Melancholy, that make Men believe that they are, or do, what they are not or do not, (as in the disease called *Lycanthropia:*) and to the inchantments of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, who deluded the senses of *Pharaoh*. Others more fully call it, *a more vehement operation of the great Impostor, whereby he obtrudes some noxious Errour upon the mind, and perswades with such efficacy, that it is embraced with confidence, defended strenuously, and propagated zealously.*

Gal 3. 1.

Gal. 3. 1.

Fascinatio est Spiritus Impostoris vehementior operatio, qua noxium aliquem Errorem in dogmate vel praxi (Doctrinæ sanæ contrarium, sed Sophisticis præstigiis depictum) pro veritate incautis hominibus obtendit, iisque efficaciter persuadit, ut Errorem eum confidenter amplectantur, strenuè defendant, & zelo,non secundum Deum propagant. *Dickson Therapeut. Sacra*, lib. 3. cap. 7.

A particular account of the way and manner by which the Devil doth this, is a task beyond sober enquiry ; it may suffice us to know that such power he hath, and this I shall confirm from *Scripture*, and from the *effects* of such delusion.

First, There are several Scriptures which assert a Power in Satan to *bewitch* the minds of Men into Errour, from which I shall draw such notes as may confirm, and in part explain this Truth in hand.

And I shall begin with that of *Gal.* 3. 1. *O foolish* Galatians, *who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the Truth*, &c. The word which the Apostle here useth for bewitching, (as *Grammarians* and *Criticks* note) is borrowed from the practice of

Βασκαίνω, Grammaticis dictum esse placet quasi φασκαίνω, id est, τοῖς φαεσι κτείνειν quo pertinet illud. *Virg.* Nescio quis teneros, *&c.* Vid. *Piscator* in loc. and *Leigh. Crit. Sac.*

Witches

Witches and Sorcerers, who use by secret powers to bind the Senses, and to effect Mischiefs. 'Tis true he speaks of false Apostles, but he intends Satan as the chief Workman; and this he transfers to signify Satan's Power upon the Mind, in blinding the Understanding for the entertainment of Errour. Neither can any thing be objected why this place should not prove a fascinating power in Satan (such as we have been speaking of) but this, that it may be supposed to intend no more than an *ordinary* powerful *perswasion* by *Arguments*: Yet this may be answered, not only from the *authority* of learned Interpreters, who apprehend the Apostle and his expression to intend more, but also from some *concomitant* particulars in the Text. He calls them *foolish Galatians*, as we translate it, but the Original goes a little higher, to signify a *madness*; and withall, he seems to be surprized with *wonder* at the Power of Satan upon them, which had not only prevailed against the *Truth*, but against such *evident* manifestations of it as they had, when they were so plainly, fully and efficaciously instructed; for *before their eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth*: which expressions and carriage cannot rationally be thought to befit a *common* ordinary case.

Neque tantum quod se decipi passi fuerint eos arguit, sed quadam veluti magica incantatione deludi. *Calvin* in *loc.*

'Ανόητοι mente alienati—eorum lapsum magis dementiæ esse quam stultitiæ, arguens. *Calvin.*

Next to this, let us a little consider that famous Scripture, in 2 *Thess.* 2. 9, 10, 11. *Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all Power —— and for this cause, God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lye ——*. I shall from this place observe a few things, which if put together, will clear the truth we speak of: As first, In this delusion here mentioned, the Apostle doth not only set down *extraordinary outward* means, (as *Signs*, and *Lying Wonders*) but also suits these extraordinary means with a sutable concomitant *inward power*; for, *by Power* I do not understand (as some) a power of shewing Signs, and doing Wonders, as if the Apostle had said, ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων, *with the power of Signs and Wonders*, for the words will not well bear that without some unnatural straining: but I understand by it, a Power *distinct* from the Signs and Wonders by which he moves their hearts to believe, by an *inward working* upon their minds, *striking in* with the *outward means* of Lying Miracles propounded to their senses. And we may the better satisfy our selves in this interpretation, if we compare it with *Rom.* 15. 19. where not only the power of doing Wonders is expressed by a phrase, proper and *different* from this of the Text in hand, *through mighty*

Piscator & *Sclator*.

ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος Θεοῦ.

mighty Signs and Wonders, or in the power of Signs and Wonders, but it is also *clearly distinguished* from the *Power* of the *Spirit* of God in working upon the hearts to make those Wonders efficacious and perswasive; so that, as in the Spirit of God we observe a Power *to do Wonders*, and a Power to *work upon the Heart* by these Wonders, we may conclude that this wicked Spirit hath also (in order to Sin and Delusion) this *twofold* Power. But secondly, I note further, that this Power is called a *special energy* of peculiar force and efficacy in its working, the strange inexpressible strength of it seems to stand in need of many words for explanation: He calls it *all Power* (which as well notes the *degree* and height, as the *variety* of its operations,) and then the *energy*, the virtue, operativeness and strength of Power. Thirdly, 'Tis also to be observed that Satan's success and exercise of this Power of Delusion depends upon the *commission of God*, and that therefore 'tis *extraordinary*, and not permitted to him but upon special occasions and provocation, *for this cause God shall send*, &c. Fourthly, The *success* of this Power when exercised, is *certain*. They are not only strong delusions in regard of the *Power* from whence they come, but also in regard of the *event*, those upon whom they come cannot but believe. *Infatuation* and *Pertinaciousness* are the certain fruits of it. Fifthly, The Proof of all is manifest in the *quality* of the Errours entertained, for they are palpable gross *lyes*, and yet believed as the *very truths of God*, and they are in such *weighty* points as do evidently determine the Soul to ruine, *lies to be damned*, which two things are sufficient proofs of Spiritual fascination. It being unimaginable that rational Men (and especially such as were instructed to a belief of a contrary truth) should so far degenerate from the light of Reason, as to be deluded by gross and *apparent* Lyes, and of such *high importance*, except their minds had been *blinded* in some extraordinary way. Some further confirmation may be added to this truth from 1 *King*. 22. 21. *And there came forth a Spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will perswade him —— I will go forth, and I will be a lying Spirit in the mouth of all his Prophets, and he said, thou shalt perswade him, and prevail also.* I might here take notice of Satan's *readiness* in this work, as wanting neither skill nor will, if he were but always furnished with a Commission; as also the powerful *efficacy* of Spiritual Witchcraft, where it pleaseth the Lord to permit to Satan the exercise of his Power,

καὶ ἐνέργειαν τοῦ σατανᾶ.

ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει.

Sclator in *loc.*

Power, *Thou shalt perswade, and prevail also.* But that which I would observe here, is something relating to the *manner* of his proceeding in these Delusions: He attempted to deceive the *false Prophets*, and by them to delude *Ahab*; and both, by being a *lying Spirit in the mouth of the Prophets*: which necessarily, (as *Peter Martyr* observes) implies, (1) That Satan had a Power so strongly to fix upon their *Imaginary Faculty*, the *Species*, Images, or Characters of what was to be suggested, that he could not only make them apprehend, what he *presented* to their minds; but also, make them *believe*, that it was a *Divine Inspiration*, and consequently true: for these false Prophets did not speak *hypocritically*, what they knew to be false, but what they confidently apprehended to be true; as appears by the whole story. (2) He could *irritate*, and inflame their desires to *publish* these their Perswasions to the King, after the manner of Divine Prophecies. (3) He had a further power of perswading *Ahab*, that his Prophets *spake Truth*.

Licet ei (Deo concedente) species, imagines & simulacra rerum falsarum effingere in imaginaria hominum facultate, ita ut falsa pro veris eis demonstrentur, deinde potest incendere atq; inflammare appetitum eorum ad ea incredibili alacritate prædicanda, &c. Pet. *Martyr.* in Loc.

That passage of *Rom.* 1. 28. *God gave them over to a Reprobate Mind*,——doth give some account *how* Men are brought by the Devil into these false Perswasions. A Reprobate Mind, is a Mind *injudicious*; a Mind that hath lost its Power of discerning. 'Tis plain then, that he can so *besot* and blind the mind, that it shall not be startled at things of greatest *absurdity*, or inconveniency.

Reynolds treat of Passions, *Chap.* 4. p. 27.

Νοῦς ἀδόκιμος.

If any yet further enquire, how he can do these things? We must answer, That his particular ways and methods, in this case, we know not; only it may be added, That *Ephes.* 4. 17. *Paul* tells us, He can make their *minds vain*, and *darken* their *understandings*. By Mind, the seat of *Principles* is commonly understood. By Understanding, the *Reasoning*, or discursive Faculty, which is the Seat of Conclusions: so that his Power seems to extend to the *obliterating of Principles*; and can also *disable* them to make *right inferences*: insomuch, that he wants nothing, that may be necessary to the begetting of strong perswasions of any falshood, which he suggests; according to what is intimated, *Gal.* 5. 3. *This Perswasion cometh not of him that called you*: that is, not of God, but of the Devil.

Νοῦς. Διάνοια.

From all these Scriptures, then it appears, That this Spiritual Fascination, *is a Power in Satan which he exerts, by special Commission, upon those that receive not the Truth in the love of it, by which*

be can ſo ſtrongly imprint falſhoods upon their Minds, that they become unable to diſcern betwixt Truth, and a Lye; and ſo by darkning their Underſtanding, they are effectually perſwaded to believe an Errour.

Secondly, There is yet another proof of this Spiritual Witchcraft, from the conſideration of the *Effects* of it upon the Deluded: and the uncouth, ſtrange unnatural way of its proceeding. Let all particulars of this kind be put together, and it will not be found poſſible to give any other rational accompt of ſome Errours, than that of extraordinary Deluſion.

Firſt, Let us take notice of the *vileneſs* and odiouſneſs of ſome Errours that have prevailed upon Men; ſome have been plainly *ſottiſh*; ſo evidently fooliſh, that it cannot be imagined, that Men that entertained them, had at that time the uſe of Reaſon, or any competent Underſtanding. This very conſideration, the Prophet *Iſaiah* inſiſts upon largely, *Chap.* 44. from *verſ.* 9. to *verſ.* 21. Where he taxeth them ſmartly, for the ſenceleſs doltiſhneſs of their Errour, in Worſhiping Idols: he tells them, the *matter* of it is the Work of Nature; a *Cedar*, *Oak*, or *Aſh*, that they themſelves (poſſibly) had planted, and the Rain did nouriſh it. *Verſ.* 14. He tells them alſo, That the *form* of it, was from the Art of the Workman, the *Smith*, or *Carpenter*. *Verſ.* 12, 13. *The Smith with the Tongs, both worketh in the Coals, and faſhioneth it with Hammers, and worketh it with the ſtrength of his Arms.——The Carpenter ſtretcheth out his Rule, he marketh it out with a Line, he fitteth it with Planes, and he marketh it out with a Compaſs.* ——— He further minds them, that without any reverence, they make uſe of the reſidue of the Materials; out of which, they formed their Idol to common ſervices of dreſſing their meat, and warming themſelves; *He burneth part thereof in the Fire, with part thereof he eateth Fleſh, he roaſteth roaſt, and is ſatisfied; yea, warmeth himſelf, and ſaith, Aha, I am warm, I have ſeen the fire.* Verſ. 16. Then he accuſeth them of Sottiſhneſs; in that, the *reſidue thereof he maketh a God, even his graven Image, he falleth down to it, and worſhipeth it, and prayeth unto it, and ſaith, Deliver me, for thou art my God*, verſ. 17. And from all this he concludes, That ſeeing this is ſo directly contrary to common reaſon and underſtanding, (which in the ordinary exerciſe of it, would eaſily have freed them from ſuch a dotage: for if they had but *knowledge or underſtanding to ſay, I have burnt part of it in the fire; I have baked bread*

bread, and ſhall I make the reſidue an abomination?—Verſ. 19. They could not have been ſo fooliſh,) it muſt then, of neceſſity, be a Spiritual Infatuation. *Their Eyes were ſhut that they cannot ſee, and their Hearts, that they cannot underſtand*—Verſ. 18. *A deceived heart hath turned him aſide*——Verſ. 20. Other Errours there are, that lead to *beaſtly*, and unnatural Villanies; ſuch as directly croſs all the *ſober* Principles of Man-kind, the *natural* Principles of Modeſty, the moſt *general* and *undoubted* Principles of Religion, and Holineſs. As when Adulteries, Swearing, Ranting, going Naked, Cruelties, Murthers, outragious Confuſions, and Madneſs, are cloathed with *pretences* of Spirit, Revelation, *freedom* in the uſe of the Creature, *exerciſe* of Love, and having *all things common*, &c. (Of which, ſad inſtances have been given more than once.) Let any ſober Man conſider, how it could come to paſs, That Men that have *Reaſon enough* to defend them againſt ſuch Furies, and the *knowledge of Scripture*, which every-where (with the greateſt happineſs imaginable, and higheſt earneſtneſs) doth *prohibit* ſuch Practices as moſt Abominable, and doth *direct* to a Sober, Juſt, Modeſt, Humble, inoffenſive Life, ſhould entertain notwithſtanding, ſuch Errours, as transform Men into Beaſts, Monſters, or rather Devils; and Religion, into the groſſeſt Impieties: and all this, as the *perfection* and top of Religious Attainment, commanded in the Word of God, or by his Spirit; and well-pleaſing to moſt holy and pure Divine Majeſty? Let it (I ſay) be left to the conſideration of Men, how it ſhould be, without ſome ſuch extraordinary Cauſe as hath been mentioned?

Secondly, Let it be obſerved alſo, That ſome Errours bring with them ſome *extraordinary, ſtrange, unnatural, unuſual Actions*; and put Men into ſuch *odd garbs*, poſtures, and behaviours, that it is eaſie to ſee, they are acted by a force, or power, not *humane*. Some have been carried to do things, beyond whatſoever might have been expected from the age and capacities of the Parties; as Extaſies, Trances, and quakings of little Children; their Propheſying, and ſpeaking Scripture-threatnings after ſuch fits. Some have been acted in a way of *extatical Fury*; as * *Montanus*, of whom *Euſebius* witneſſeth: That ſometimes he would be ſeized upon, by a kind of *malignant Spirit*, and would ſuddenly break forth into a *rage* and Madneſs; and preſently utter *raſh and bold Speeches, ſtrange unuſual Voices, with Propheſyings; inſomuch, that he was judged by thoſe that ſaw him, to be acted by the Devil:*

* Ferunt quendam nomine *Montanum*— Spiritu quodam maligno abripi, & de repente furore & mentis inſania exagitatum bacchari: atq; mox non ſolum timere garrire, ſed peregrinas quaſdem voces fundere & Prophetare--Nonnulli illum tanquam inſano Spiritu præditum, Dæmonio agitatum —increpabant ita *Chriſtopher* interp. *Euſeb.* Hiſtor. *Eccleſ.* Lib. 5. *Cap.* 15.

Devil. Others have been as in a more *sober spiritual Rapture*: an instance whereof I shall give you from Mr. *Baxter* in these words; *I have heard from an ancient godly Man, that knew* Arthington, *and* Coppinger; *that they were possessed with the Spirit of the* Grundletonians. *The same Man affirmed, That he went but once among them himself, and after Prayer, they breathed on him, as giving him the holy Ghost; and he was so strangely transported for three days, that he was not the same Man; and his Family wondred what was the matter with him: he had no Confession of Sin, but an elevated strain in Prayer, as if he had been in strange Raptures: and after three days he was as before, and came no more at them.* Some have been carried into *childish*, and ridiculous Actions; such was the behaviour of *Jo. Gilpin*, in his Delusion at *Kendal* in *Westmerland*; as his going to the Fidlers House, playing upon a Base Viol, in token of Spiritual Melody; his creeping up the Streets upon hands and knees, in token of bearing his Cross; his making Marks on the ground, and beating it, as his Mortification of Sin: and a great many more things of like nature.

Baxter's confession of Faith *pag.* 3. In the Margin.

See his story called the *Quaker shaken*

Such things as these, are as spiritual Marks and *Characters* engraven upon Errours, by which a diabolical Power, moving and acting such deluded Creatures, (like so many Puppits) is evidently discovered.

Thirdly, When we see not only Idiots, and those whose defect of Understanding, might put them under the power of an ordinary Cheat, thus imposed upon; but Men, otherwise *intelligent*, rational, and serious, blinded with Follies, taken with apparent Dotages, admiring Trifles, and carried away with things, which common reason would teach them to abhor: 'tis more than suspicious, that 'tis not any *probability* of Truth, or *excellency* in the Errour, that prevails with them: but, a *Spiritual Power* that doth bewitch them. When we consider, that such a Learned Man as *Tertullian* begins to admire such a wretch as *Montanus*; or such an one as *Arthington*, led away with *Hacket* and *Coppinger*; or such a Man as *Kneperdollin*, seduced by *John of Leyden*; and especially, such numbers of wise, and seemingly *sober and Religious* persons going down the stream, after *irrational* and plainly *irreligious* Errours; what else can be apprehended to be the cause, but a powerful Satanical Delusion?

Fourthly, Add we to these, the consideration of the *suddenness* of the prevalency of such Errours, against plain and evident Truths,

Truths, (which is a circumstance taken notice of by the Apostle. *Gal.* 1. 6. *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the Grace of Christ, unto another Gospel.*) In which case we may observe, it usually falls out, That Mens *Affections* prevent their *Discoveries*, at the first view they are taken, before they understand what the Errour is; and they are *perswaded before they know*.

Fifthly and Lastly, That the *earnestness* of the prosecution, by which they maintain, and propagate the Errour, is a kind of *unnatural fury*, which hurries Men with violence into an unyielding stifness, to the stifling of all kind of Charity, and Consideration. These things put together, (I say) makes the matter in hand evident; when Men, otherwise *rational*, are at *first touch*, *highly* inamoured with, and *violent* in the pursuit of Errours, that are *sottish*, or *devillish*; we can resolve it into nothing less, than into that of the Apostle, *Who hath bewitched you?* The improvement of this first, and great advantage for the introduction of Errours, is more than can be well expressed; but he hath besides, other advantages which he no way neglects: among which,

Secondly, Our *Imperfection in Knowledge*, is none of the least; if our Knowledge had been perfect, it would have been a task too hard for the Devil, to make us Erroneous; for Men do *not err*, but so far as they are *ignorant:* to impose upon Men against clear and certain Knowledg is impossible. Men cannot *believe* that to be *true*, which they *know* to be *false*. It would be as silly for Satan to make such attempts, as for a Jugler to endeavour the deception of those, that know and see the ways of his Conveiances as well as himself. That our Knowledg is imperfect, I shall prove and explain in the following particulars.

First, The Scripture plainly asserts it, the greatest number of Men (which are in an *unregenerate* Estate) are expresly called, *foolish*, blind, ignorant, Men that are in Darkness, Men that do not know, nor consider, that perish through Ignorance. Others, that (in comparison to these) are called *Children of the Light*; and such as *see with open face*, are notwithstanding (when compared to a state of Perfection) represented to be in the *Non-age* of their Knowledg, unripe, imperfect; the Apostle doth so express it, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9. *We know in part, we prophesie in part.* In the Explanation of this, he compares our attainments in this World, to the *understanding*, *thoughts*, and *speakings* of Children, *v.* 11. concludes *v.* 12. That all

all our knowledg, gives us but a dark imperfect reflection of things; *we see through a Glass darkly.*

Secondly, Men that have had the *clearest heads*, and have been at the greatest *pains* in their enquiries to find out Truths, have brought back the clear *conviction* of their own Ignorance. *Austin* confesseth, That in the Scriptures, (which he made his chief study) the things *which he knew not, were more than the things he understood.* *Chytræus*, in humble Modesty goes a little further, *My dearest knowledg* (saith he) *is to know, that I know nothing*: and it will be a clear demonstration of that Mans ignorance, that boasts of his Knowledg; his own mouth will prove against him, that *he knows nothing as he ought to know.*

Plura nescio quam scio. *Epist.* 119. *c.* 21 *Melch. Adam* in vita.

Thirdly, The consideration of the *Nature* of the things, which are the Objects upon which we employ our search, will sufficiently convince us, that we do comprehend but very little. For though the Scripture hath expressed the *main concerns* of eternal Life so fully, that they are as *clear as Light*, and need no such stretch of the Brain, but that the meanest capacities may as certainly understand them, as they understood any thing of common business; as, *That Christ dyed for Sinners*; *that without Faith it is impossible to please God*; *that without Holyness no Man shall see his face*, &c. Yet, (as *Peter* speaks, 2 *Pet.* 3. 16.) *There are many things that are hard to be understood*; there are Difficulties, Depths, and Mysteries. Some things (whereof we have but dark touches in Scripture; though enough to let us know, that such things there are; and to humble us for our ignorance) are, in their *own nature*, sublime, bounded on all sides with Rocks, and Præcipices, where our near and bold approaches are prohibited: such are those things, that concern the Decrees of God, the Trinity, &c. Other things are dark and uncertain to us, from their very *proximity* to us (as some are pleased to fancy the reason;) such are the nature, faculties, and workings of our own Souls within us: which we cannot *directly* see, (as the Eye sees not it self) and do but as it were guess by dark *reflections*. Some things in Scripture are *accidentally* obscure *to us*, that were *plain* to those that heard them *first*, to whom they were spoken, and written: for now, to the understanding of a great many passages, there is necessary the *knowledg of the Tongues*, in which they were dictated, of *the Histories* of those times to which they severally related; as also, of the particular *Customs* of the *Jewish* Nation, which gave a *mold* and form to a great many

δυσνόητά τινα

ny Scripture Aſſertions: all which are eaſie, and familiar to thoſe that knew the exact propriety of ſuch Languages, were acquainted throughly with ſuch Hiſtories, Cuſtoms, Uſages, and manner of Speakings: and beſides all theſe, the *application* of *general Rules*, to *particular* Caſes, (where a little circumſtance may make a great alteration,) is full of puzzle and intricacy. Inſomuch, that ſome have thought, that there are *ſeveral* caſes of Conſcience, that are not yet *fully* determined, and that are like ſo to remain.

D'*Eſpagne* popular Errours. §. 2. *Chap.* 12.

Fourthly, Neither is the *nature of Knowledg* it ſelf, without an Argument to prove, the inſufficiency of our Knowledg; to Know, is properly to underſtand things by their *Cauſes*; or at leaſt, by their *Effects*: and to make a right *reſult* of Particulars from a general Maxim. Such a kind of Knowledg, is neceſſary in Religion; for ſetting aſide, ſome particulars of *myſterious* height, (about which, God hath ſet bounds, leſt Men in preſumptuous boldneſs ſhould adventure to *break through unto the Lord to gaze.*) And ſome things which are the *Principles of Nature*, or their *next reſults*, (which are upon that ſcore, beyond all need of enquiry,) in all which, 'tis enough to believe, that what the Scripture ſaith is true, without asking a further account: yet in other things, the Scripture gives us the *Grounds*, *Reaſons*, and *Proofs* of what it declares, or aſſerts; as may appear by infinite Examples: ſo that to know *Chriſt dyed*, or that we are *juſtified by Faith*, or that *Chriſt ſhall come to Judgment*; without a knowledge of the *grounds*, and reaſons of theſe things, is indeed but *groſs ignorance.* The like may be ſaid, of the Knowledg of general Precepts, without the Knowledg of their neceſſary Application.

But how few are there that do thus know? the greateſt part of Men ſatisfie themſelves with the bare affirmations of Scripture, and they reſolve all into this, That the *Word of God ſaith ſo*: or, *That it is the Will of God it ſhould be ſo*, without further enquiry.

And as for others, though they may know the Reaſons of many things, yet are there a vaſt number of Particulars, whoſe reaſons we *know not*, though the Scripture may contain them: and as for Conſequences, and the *application* of general Rules, their juſt *limitation*, and the *Enumeration* of the Caſes wherein they are *true*, or *falſe*: it is that that keeps the Wits of Men upon the *rack* perpetually.

Fifthly, The *unſuitableneſs* of our Capacities, to thoſe *Objects*

of Knowledg, may be particularly considered as a further confirmation of our Ignorance. The incapacity of the Vulgar, is generally observed; some we find so grosly ignorant, that they are uncapable to comprehend the easiest matters; and this makes their Perswasion to some plain Truths so very difficult, that when they are (as it were) *brayed in a Morter* by a Multitude of unreasonable Arguments; yet their ignorance *departs not from them:* but they will stubbornly hold the conclusion of their own fancy, whatever become of the Premises. Those that are of an higher form, and seem to understand a *great many* particulars in Religion, are (ordinarily) unable to conjoyn all Truths *into one intire proportionable Body*; they heap up several Notions that they hear here and there, but know not their *consistencies*; insomuch, that they either are like Children, who know all the letters of the Alphabet, without the skill to frame Words or Sentences out of them, being unable to give an account how their Notions are related *one to another*, or *to the whole*; or if they attempt such a thing, they hang *inconsistent* things on the same *thred*, and do but *humano capiti, cervicem jungere equinam.* If these instances (and a great many more of like kind) were not at hand, yet the very *condescentions* of our great Prophet the Lord Jesus, and of his Disciples in their wayes of Teaching, do evince; that the capacities of Men are low: that they are dull of Hearing, children in Understanding. The course they took, was to instruct them in a plain familiar way, by *Parables*, and *Examples*: Thus were they *fed* as *babes in Christ* (according to the Apostles Similitude,) with *Milk, and not with strong Meat, because they were not able to bear it.* (1 Cor. 3. 1.) And yet Christ sometimes complained, That this would not do. For so he speaks, *John* 3. 12. *If I have told you Earthly things* (that is Divine Truth, in earthly and common Similitudes) *and ye believe not*, (*i. e.* cannot apprehend them) *how shall ye believe, if I tell you of Heavenly things?* How unable then would you be, to understand these Truths, if I should speak in Language, and Expression properly suited to their Natures? a great check to our slowness of apprehension.

But possibly, some may expect higher matters, from those that are exalted above the *common rank* of Men, by the repute they have of Learning. And indeed it cannot be denied, but such have very great *advantages* for the widening of their Capacities: yet are they not such as wholly take away the Distemper, but

still

ſtill ſo much in capacity may be ſeen in them, as will ſufficiently juſtifie the charge of imperfection in Knowledg againſt the moſt Learned. Let us bring in ſome inſtances, and it will be evident,

Firſt, The *greateſt* Errours that have moſt diſturbed the Church in all Ages, have had their riſe from *Learned* Men; the names of their *Authors* are marked upon their *Foreheads*. Theſe known Errours are ſo many, that they fill whole Volumes. The reſult of which conſideration, will be this, That Learned Men have often been very dangerouſly miſtaken. (2) The *preſent Contentions* and Diſputes of Men, managed on all hands with ſo much earneſtneſs, wherein one party Triumphs over another, and *all* (in their own apprehenſions) *are Victorious*; inſtead of *Conqueſts*, by Arguments and Anſwers, *each party* is but more *confirmed* in its own apprehenſions, and yet the *one half* is *certainly wrong*, and perhaps in many things both Parties are miſtaken. This (I ſay) ſufficiently ſhews the incapacities of the Learned: for if every *capacity* were truly *correſpondent to Truth*, there would be no more Diſputes nor differences. (3) The moſt Learned, find the buſineſs of their *own perſwaſion* and ſatisfaction in many Truths (in which common People have no ſcruple nor doubt) *very difficult*, becauſe they ſee more Objections to be anſwered, and more of the weakneſs of Arguments than others do; but this ſhews their Capacities are not ſo large as ſome would think. (4) Let us once for all, conſider that which ſeems to be the *higheſt Evidence* for Knowledge and Underſtanding in the Learned; and we ſhall find upon juſt examination, 'tis no more than an *argument* of their *Ignorance*: What is there wherein they ſeem more acute, and Eagle-ey'd, than in their *Diſtinctions*, by which they would give us the moſt *minute differences* of things; and appear ſo exact, as if they would *divide an Atom*, and give every thing its *juſt weight and meaſure*. But let us conſider, that (though all Diſtinctions are not unprofitable) their *multitude* is become oppreſſive and troubleſom, and more time muſt be ſpent in learning *terms* and words of Art, than *things*; and their *nicety* and ſubtilty ſo great, that they rather *darken Truth*, and give occaſion to bold Spirits, to undertake the defence of any Paradox. Nay, if we could ſever theſe clearly from their abuſes, yet, ſeeing 'tis certain there are more diſtinctions of *terms* than *things*; they will evince, That our Knowledge is more *verbal* than *real*, and that often for a *moun-*

tain of Words, we have but a *mole-hill* of ſubſtantial Matter. Nay, ſeeing we make but a ſorry ſhift, at beſt, by theſe Artifices to come to ſome *rude conceptions* of things, which otherwiſe we cannot in any tolerable manner comprehend; it is as great a *proof* of our imperfection in Knowledg, as the neceſſary uſe of *ſtaves and crutches* is an evidence of *lameneſs*. If I ſhould paſs from this, to the conſideration of the Multitude (beyond all number) of *Books* that are written, we ſhall find them but ſo many *Proclamations* of our Ignorance; for if we could believe *them all* to contain ſo many wholſome Precepts of *neceſſary* Truth (which yet we cannot rationally imagin) this would imply, That the *greateſt part wanted* theſe informations; and that common Ignorance is not only a *general diſtemper*, but alſo a Diſtemper *hard* to be cured, that ſtands in need of ſuch *Multitudes* of Inſtructors, and ſuch *varieties* of helps. But if we believe, that among this infinite number of Volumes there are *thouſands of Lyes*, millions of unproved *Conjectures*, millions of millions of idle unprofitable *Fancies*; then do we in expreſs terms pronounce them guilty of Ignorance, and of Ignorance ſo much the more *dangerous*, by how much the more *bold* it is, to avouch it ſelf in the Light, and to obtrude it ſelf upon the belief of others, who inſtead of being better informed by it, ſhall but encreaſe their own blindneſs: were there nothing to be ſaid but this, That there are ſuch a vaſt multitude of *Commentators* upon the Bible, which do all pretend to expound and explain it, it would of neceſſity admit of theſe Concluſions. (1) That the Bible hath in it things ſo *dark* or at leaſt, our *capacities* are ſo *dull*, that there is need of great endeavours to explain the one, or aſſiſt the other. (2) That the Knowledg of Men is *imperfect*: for if all, or moſt Men could *certainly interpret* the Scripture, there needed not ſo many Volumes, but that *one, or two* might have ſignified as much, as now whole *Libraries* can do.

The imperfection of our Knowledg, being thus laid open, 'tis eaſie to ſee, what advantages the Devil may make out of it, for the promoting of Errour; for it muſt now become our wonder, not that *any Man errs*, but that *all do not*. We find it eaſie to impoſe any thing upon Children, 'tis an eaſie matter for a trifle to cheat them out of all they have. Surely then Satan may do as much by Men, who are but *Children in underſtanding*. The Apoſtle, *Epheſ.* 4. 14. puts us in mind of this hazard, under that very

ry similitude, *That we henceforth be no more Children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine.* How fitly doth he resemble us to Children? Their weaknesses are, (1) Want of *discerning*, they see not the true worth of things. (2) *Credulity*, they believe all fair speeches, and specious Promises; and the hazard of both these is in this, That it makes them *unconstant*, *uncertain*, and *fickle*; and such are we made by our Ignorance: so *little* do we truly discern, so apt are we to *believe* every pretence (for *the simple believes every word*, Prov. 14. 15.) That as the Apostle's Metaphors do tell us) we are easily *tossed* from one conceit or Opinion to another, as a *Ship* is by the Waves, or a *Feather* in the Wind. Κλυδονιζόμενοι Περιφερόμενοι

Thirdly, A third advantage which the Devil takes against us in his design of Errour, is the *byass* of the Mind; were our Understandings purely free, in a just and *even ballance* toward all things propounded to its deliberation and assent, (though it were imperfect in its Light) the danger were the less; but, now in regard of the *bent* and sway it is under; 'tis commonly *partial*, and inclined to one side more than to another, and yet the Matter were the less, if only *one or two* noted things had the power of setting up a false-Light before the Mind; but there are many things that are apt to do us this mischief, which have the *same* Effect upon us, that *bribes* have upon persons interested in Judgment, which not only tempts them to do wrong, but so blindes their eyes, that they know not they do so, or at least, not in so great a measure. The Mind is byassed.

First, *Naturally* to *Errour*, rather than Truths; the corruption of our Nature is general, and doth not only dispose the *will* and *affections* to *practical* iniquities, but doth also incline the *Understanding* to *Errour* and misapprehension. And that seems to be the ground of Christs assertion against the *Jews*; *Jo.* 5. 43. *I am come in my Fathers Name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.* Which implies, That Men are Naturally more prone to believe an *Imposter*, than one that speaks the most certain and profitable Verities: and besides this general inclination to vanities and lyes, there are (if some think right) some Errours that are *formally* engraven in the *nature of faln Man*; as that Opinion, *To be saved by Works.* For not only do all Men (that have any apprehensions of a future Eternal State) resolve that question of obtaining Salvation into Works, as the proper Cause, D'*Espagne* popular Errours. §. 2. *Chap.* 4.

Cause, (and indeed no other could have been imagined, if the Scripture had not revealed the Redemption by the Blood of Jesus.) But the *Jews* in *Jo. 6. 28.* (When they propound that Question, *What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?*) take it for granted, That Works (of some kind or other) are the causes of Happiness. Possibly some impression of that Notion (while it was a Truth, as in the state of Innocency it was,) may yet remain upon our Natures, though by the Fall, the Case is altered with us.

Secondly, The Mind is byassed by *bodily temper*, and *complectional inclination*; the varieties of Complections, introduce varieties of Humours, and Dispositions: and the Understanding (being necessitated to look through these, as so many *coloured glasses*,) is apt to judge, (that is to miss-judge) according to the miss-representation of Objects.

Thirdly, Sometimes *habitual acquirements* have the same influence upon the Understanding, that Natural humours have. The Arts and Sciences we study, our ways of Education and Imployment, are but so many *prejudicate præpossessions* that do secretly taint the Mind.

Fourthly, There are also *accidental inclinations*, which (though not customary) have the force of a second Nature, because their working is violent and impetuous, and these which are from a *wounded Conscience*, or *excesses* of *Melancholy*, have a byass more than ordinary; they lay violent Hands upon the Understanding, and with a mighty Torrent run it down. So that if an Errour be offered, that is suitable to such fears, or misapprehensions, it can scarce miss of success. The extraordinary *turbulencies* of some other Passions; as Anger, Love, *&c.* have the like Effect.

Fifthly, *Vitious Habits* do so much byass the Mind, that the Understanding must needs be defiled by them. Nothing can more prepare the Mind to a *wicked Errour*, than a *wicked Life*. An Errour of *Indulgence* (being so grateful to Corruption) may readily find favour with the understandings of those that *know not to do good*, because *they have accustomed themselves to do evil*.

Sixthly, There are *External things* that have no less power on the Understanding, than any of the fore-going; and these are *Custom*, *Education*, and *Interest*; these stick so close, and work so subtily, that though there are few that are not (in disputable cases) *influenced* by them, yet none are able, or willing to take notice,

how,

how, and by *what steps* they do engage them to pass Sentence against Truth. And indeed, that Man must have a singular measure of suspicious Watchfulness, and clear Integrity, that is not deceived by them. And the best way to keep clear of the mischief that these may do us, *is to be severe in our suspitions*, *on that side to which Custom and Interest have their tendencies.*

Seventhly, I might Note, that there is something considerable to this purpose, in the *nature of Spirits*. Some Spirits are *unfixed*, and *volatile*; and these are soon altered by their own *unsteadiness*. Others are *tenacious* and unflexible; and if such be first set wrong, 'tis not an easie thing that will reduce them to Truth. Others are *soft and ductile*, perswaded by *good words* as soon as *strong arguments*. And again, some are of such a rough, sowre, *contradictious temper*, that they will sooner chuse to run wrong, than comply with the perswasions of those that offer Truth, even for that reason, *because they are perswaded to it*; so that the Truth which (if none had minded them) they of themselves would have embraced, they will now refuse when 'tis pressed upon them, out of a cross and thwarting humour, because they hate nothing more *than to do as they are bidden.*

To come a little nearer, Let us consider how these things shew their Power upon the Mind, to sway and incline it. 'Tis indeed true, That in things that are *clearly* and *strongly* propounded to the Understanding, it cannot but judg according to the evidence of Truth; and cannot be guided by the Will, to judg contrary: nay, the Will (though in things purely *speculative*, it may retain its *averseness*; as also in things *Practical*, while they are considered only, as what *may* be done, before the Understanding hath come up to its *final resolve*, determining, that such things *must*, or *ought* to be done) cannot but follow the *light* and information of the Understanding, and that according to the *Proportion* of its Conviction; so that though in some Cases, a Man would have things otherwise than he believes them to be: yet, he cannot believe *what he will*, neither can he *refuse* to will what is *certainly* represented to be good and necessary. Notwithstanding all this, the fore-mentioned Particulars may so byass the Mind, that it shall not act truly and steadily; as we may see in these *three* Particulars.

Tantum quisque vult, quantum intelligit se velle debere.

First, In things *clearly* demonstrated to the Understanding; though the Will cannot *directly* oppose, nor prevail to have them judged

Intellectus sequitur voluntatem quoad exercitium, non quoad specificationem.

judged false, yet it can *indirectly* hinder the procedure of the Understanding, and divert it from fixing its *consideration* upon the Truth; or from working it self into *positive determinations*, for bringing it into Practice. Thus, many that cannot but believe there is a God, and that his Law is true; being byassed by their Lusts, the power of Pleasures, or Interest, &c. do prevail upon their understandings, to take up *other Objects* of consideration; so that they are said to forget God, and to cast his Commandments behind their backs: as also, not to remember their latter-end, though they cannot but believe, that they shall dye. Truth may be *imprisoned*, and fettered, where it cannot be *slain*. We read of *holding the Truth in Unrighteousness*, Rom. 1. 18. Which was this, That those *Heathens* (of whom the Apostle speaks) by reason of their vitious Inclinations and Practices; though they could not obliterate those notices of Equity and Religion that were imprinted on their Minds; yet, they kept them at under, (as Captives in a Dungeon) and suffered them not to rise up in a just practical improvement. Now the wrong that is done to Truth this way, is not only, by rendring it *unfruitful* and useless at present, but hereby the Devil hath his advantage in the *gaining of time*, to gather together *more* Forces against that Truth; and by frequent onsets of *contrary* Arguings; (especially upon the advantage of the Minds *indifferency*, and remissness, begot by long and often Diversions,) to set *another face* upon it, and by degrees to over-turn former Perswasions. This was the very Case of the *Heathens*, in the place last cited; who being first *swayed* by their Impieties, became unwilling to give way to those Dictates of Light and Justice which they had; and having thus gratified their Lusts, the Devil further prevailing with them, to find *evasions* from the power of those Truths, they began to make *unsuitable Inferences* from these Premises, which they could not deny, and so became *sottish* and *vain* in their reasonings, *changing the glory of the uncorruptible God, into an Image made like unto corruptible Man.* And by such practices against Truth, they at last *changed the Truth into a Lye*, vers. 25. and at long-run *obliterated* the knowledg of God out of their Minds. This is Satan's old Method of over-turning Truth at last, by diverting the Mind from receiving the present powerful Impressions of those Principles.

Secondly, But in things doubtful, where there is not a clear certainty,

certainty, what is Truth? but contrary Opinions ſtrive with ſuch *equal confidence*, that 'tis difficult to determine which hath the *Conqueſt*; there the Mind may be ſo ſwayed by its byaſs, that it may give *approbation* to Errour: nay, where upon a fair and *indifferent tryal*, Truth hath the *greater appearance* of ſtrength; and Errour nothing elſe, than little *ſhadows* or appearances of Reaſon to ſhelter it ſelf under; yet, that way may the mind be inclined by the aforeſaid things. We have a more *eaſie* and facile belief for what we *would have*, than for what we *would not*. Though there is nothing more noted by common experience than this, that Men are uſually drawn aſide by Humours, Inclinations, Intereſts, and Education, *&c.* to judg well of that which an unprejudiced perſon would eaſily ſee to be weak, unjuſt, ridiculous, or unreaſonable: yet, how theſe conſiderations and tempers do *exert* their force upon the Underſtanding to draw it into a compliance; or by what *ſecret Art* they can *heighten* Probabilities, and *leſſen* Objections; or by what *inſenſible progreſs* they move, that Men thus carried do not perceive that they are under ſuch a force, is not ſo very diſcernible. How often may we obſerve, Men (that are rational enough, to diſcover the pitiful ſhifts, and poor allegations of others,) with ſuch *gravity* and confidence (where their own *Intereſts* are concerned) to offer ſuch *low* reaſonings, and *extravagant* impertinences, that all that hear them, are ready to laugh at their folly; and yet they themſelves entertain no leſs than perſwaſions of the *invincibleneſs* of their Arguings? they ſo eagerly deſire what they would eſtabliſh, that they think any thing is enough to juſtifie it; and are apt to imagine that their ſhifts and excuſes appear *as ſtrong* to others, as to themſelves. I have known ſome, that by the ſway of *Intereſt*, have changed their Opinions in Religious Matters, and have really become otherwiſe perſwaded, than they had been formerly, (and not as ſome, who for advantage will *knowingly* take up what they cannot believe to be true,) and have not been able to ſay, That they have met with *new* Arguments, or *new* Anſwers to Objections; but, I know not how, Arguments, which they had *contemned*, and laid by for weak, began to look *big* upon them: the Arguments by which their former Perſwaſion was upheld, grew inſenſibly *feeble* in their hands; the one *revived*, gathered ſtrength, after they had a little cheriſhed them, by thinking there might be ſomething in them, though before they *knew* all the Particu-

lars,

lars, and could not instance in any thing which they had not formerly notified and answered; and the other sort of Arguments grew *weaker* and weaker, till at last they parted with all good conceit of them; so that such a change was but as the *turning of the Tables*: that which acted behind the *Curtain*, and wrought this change of the *Fancy*, could be no other than some of the forementioned things that byassed their Mind; for where the *Arguments*, *pro* and *con* were the *same*, the *alteration* of Opinion (where Men are not so wicked as to go directly against their own Light,) must of necessity be imputed to the *different positions* of external things, and the *different humours* and inclinations begot by them: Even as the *different stations* of Men in the prospect of some Pictures, represent them *variously*, one way they give the shape of a beautiful face; another way, they express the ugly deformity of a Devil: or as *different reflections* of the Sun-beams upon the same Object, cloath it with *several colours*. The Scripture doth also give us notice of this advantage which the Devil takes from the inclinations of Men, to lead them into mistakes. That of *Mic.* 2. 11. (*If a man walking in the Spirit of falshood, do lye, saying, I will prophesie unto thee of Wine, and of strong-drink, he shall even be the Prophet of this People*) hath this for its Foundation, that let the Errour be never so gross and palpable; (as if a Man should prophesie a liberty for Drunkenness,) if it be suitable to the *sway of peoples humours*, it will readily enough be embraced, *He shall be a Prophet to this People*: that is, such a Prophet will easily prevail with such a People, their vitious inclinations fit them for any impression of a suitable Errour. The Apostle *Paul* also found this too true in the Heresies of his own times: for he tells us, That Seducers had learned that cunning from the Devil, to draw Men to Errour, by the sway of their *Lusts*; 2 *Tim.* 3. 6. *They creep into houses, and lead Captive silly Women laden with Sins, and led away with divers Lusts.* As also, 2 Tim. 4. 6. He prophesies of the future use of this Stratagem; *After their own Lusts shall they heap to themselves Teachers.* So that the usual prevalency of Errour, was, and is, from the under-ground-working of Lusts, Humours, Habits, and Inclinations; which make Men willing to entertain an Opinion, which can but gratifie them with a suitableness, or fitness.

Thirdly, Where the fore-mentioned Particulars of Inclination, natural, or acquired Humours, Custom, Education, *&c.* do

neither

neither *divert* the Underſtanding, nor *engage* it to cloſe with Errour: yet, often do they diſcover, how powerfully they can byas the Mind, in that theſe prevail with Men, to *modifie and mold a Truth according to the bent, or form of their inclinations*. As a Bowl which is skilfully aimed at a *Mark*, goes nevertheleſs by a *Compaſs* which its byas forceth it unto, according to the riſings or fallings of the ground it meets with in the way. Men may arrive at real Truth in the main, and yet may *ſhape* it according to their *humours*. For inſtance, let us conſider the different *modes* or forms, in which the *ſame Truth* is repreſented under the workings of *different* tempers. A *Melancholy* Perſon conceives of all things under ſuch *reflections*, as Fear and Sadneſs do uſually give; if he conſider God he looks upon him in the notion of *greateſt ſeverity and juſtice*: if upon the ways of *Duty*, he colours them all *in black*, and can ſcarce account any thing *Piety*, which is not accompanied with *ſadneſs* and *mourning*; if he calls his *Soul* to a reckoning, his concluſions concerning himſelf are *ſad*, doleful, or at beſt *ſuſpicious*. On the contrary, an *hilarous* cheerful temper, cenſures all *ſadneſs* for *ſullenneſs*, and is apt to accuſe thoſe that go mourning in their way, for *unthankful Murmurers*, and *unbelieving Complainers*; it interprets God's favourable *condeſentions* to the weak, in the greateſt *latitude*, and is eaſily perſwaded to thoſe things that are upon the *utmoſt brink* of Liberty: to which, others of a *more timerous* diſpoſition dare not *approach*, for fear of offending. This puts an higher excellency upon the duties of *Praiſe*, as the other upon *Faſting* and *Mourning*. Thoſe Men that are *moroſe* and ſevere, they are apt to think, that *God is ſuch an one as themſelves*: and though they acknowledg there is ſuch a grace as Charity, yet under a pretence of *ſtrictneſs*, they cannot believe they are bound to exerciſe it towards any that are under *any failing*, of which they judge themſelves to be free; and therefore ſuch Men are uſually very *difficult*, in all caſes wherein Condeſcention is to be uſed; they are hard to be *reconciled*, and after the miſcarriage of any perſon, are not *eaſily ſatisfied* of their Repentance: and in caſes of *Diſſent* from their way and practice of Religion, they are commonly *cenſorious*, and conclude the worſt. They again that are naturally *mild and gentle*, under a pretence of Charity and Meekneſs, are apt to become *remiſs* in their Carriages towards any Brother; and becauſe *Charity thinks not evil*, they *model* their acknowledged Duty into the form of their *own diſpoſition*, and

so think they *must see, and yet not perceive*; and instead of covering the *infirmities* of a Brother, they have a Mantle to cast over every *transgression*. At the same rate also do they frame their conceptions of *God*, as if he was so *merciful*, that he would scarce reckon any Abomination to be above the height of an *ordinary infirmity*: these are apt to think, that the *mercies* of God (so much praised in Scripture) signifie *little less* than an *indulgence* in Transgression, far above what *Precisians* are apt to imagine: and that it is as *easie* to obtain *forgiveness* from God for any offence, as it is to say, *The Lord be merciful to me a Sinner*. Those that accustom themselves to the *delights of the senses*, are apt to bend the *way* of their Religion to that *humour*; and think, that nothing can be *solemn* in Worship, that is not set out with *garnishings* that may please the Eye, or Ear. Nay, 'tis observable enough, That Religion borrows some *taint* or *shape*, from the various *Studies* and *Sciences* of Men; in some, (as in many of the *Fathers*) we may see Religion dipt in *Platonism*, or *Peripateticism*. Some introduce the *distinctions* and *definitions* of Philosophy; others compel all Scriptures to submit to the Laws of strict *logical Analysis*. Thus, according to the various *Mediums* that Men look through, are Truths discoloured, and dressed up in several shapes: 'tis easie from these instances to imagine, that Satan must have a great advantage against us in point of Errour, from the byas of the Mind.

Fourthly, *Adventurous Curiosities* is another general advantage by which he works. This ariseth partly from a *desire* of Knowledge, and partly *from Pride*; and both these make way for his Design.

Divinum est scire quamplurima.

A desire after Knowledg is Natural, and withal very bewitching. To know hath something in it more than ordinary. This is noted in *Job* 11. 12. *Vain Man would be wise, though Man be born like a wild Asse's-colt*: though he be foolish, yet he *affects* Wisdome; and the very delight of Knowing, doth engage Men to *curious prying Searches*, though with much labour and hazard. Of this Temper were the *Athenians*, Act. 17. 21. *They spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing*: not barely in telling News, but in inquiries after *new Notions* and Discoveries: and this made them willing to hear *Paul*, as a *setter forth of strange Gods*, and a *new Doctrine*.

When this desire after Knowledg is animated with Pride,

as)

(as oft it is, for *Knowledg puffeth up*) then 'tis more dangerous; when Men are upon a Design, to seem higher than others, to be *singular*, to see more, than what all Men see, to be admired, to out-talk their Neighbours, what *adventures* will they not make? How fair do they lye open to any conceit that may serve this end?

That Satan labours to improve this curiosity, is without doubt; he carefully affords fuel to this burning, and diligently blows it up into a flame. The first temptation had that ingredient in it, *Ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil.* And we see it was a great enticement to *Eve*, *That which would make one wise*, was therefore desirable. The blame of *Israels* first Idolatry, seems to be laid at this door, *Deut.* 32. 17. *They sacrificed — to Gods whom they knew not, to new Gods that came newly up*: implying, That they were drawn aside from their old established way of Worship, by a curiosity, to *try the new ways* of the *Heathens*. And so great an hand hath this, generally, in Errours; That *Paul*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 3. makes this itch after Novelty the great ground of that defection from Truth, which he foresaw was coming, *They shall heap to themselves Teachers, having itching ears.* This *itch of the Ear*, is the usual fore-runner of a *Scab in the Church*, because it doth dispose Men to receive any *kind* of Teacher. God indeed doth sometimes take the advantage of our *natural curiosity* for our *good*: by this means many of *Johns* Hearers, who went out into the Wilderness to him, as to a *strange sight* (as those words imply, *What went ye out into the Wilderness to see?*) were Converted. By this means, the Gospel afterwards made a large Progress, as we see commonly *new Teachers* affect most at *first*, for when Men grow acquainted with their Gifts, their admiration decays, and the success of their Labours is not so great many times. The Devil also observing, the prevalency of Curiosity; and that Men are more pleased with *new Notions*, than with *old Truths*; he endeavours also to Plow with this Heifer, and oft makes a great Harvest by it. There is yet another advantage more that he sometimes useth: and that is,

Pruritus aurium est scabies Ecclesiarum.

Fifthly, *Atheistical Debauchery*, when Men by long custome in Sinning, have arrived to habitual Carelesness and Presumption, then they become *Practical Atheists*; their *Vitious Habits* work upon their Understandings, to *obliterate all Principles*: when Men are gone so far, they are fit Engineers for Satan; for while

they dis-believe all things, they can (to serve a *Design*, or to head a *Party*) take up any *Opinion*, and pretend the greatest seriousness in the propagating it; though in the mean time, they *secretly laugh* at the credulity of the Vulgar.

These Men *let out themselves*, and all their parts to the Devil, and he knows how to make use of them, to bring on the delusion, and deception of others. Many Ages have given Examples of such: those Seducers mentioned in the *new Testament*, were (some of them) of *this rank*, and therefore called *deceitful Workers*. Such as were not *really* under those Perswasions, which they thought to fix upon others; but upon *design*, *transformed themselves into the Apostles of Christ*; *such as served not our Lord Jesus Christ*, *but their own bellies*: and yet *by good words and fair speeches*, *deceived the hearts of the simple*, Rom. 16. 18. Who, *through Covetousness*, *with feigned words*, *made Merchandize* of Men, 2 Pet. 2. 3. *Balaam* was such, and the *Woman Jezabel that called her self a Prophetess*, Rev. 2. 20. Such was the *Arch-bishop* of *Spalato*, who for advantage could at pleasure take up, and lay down his Religion. Such an one was the *false Jew* (not so long since) discovered in this place, who (being a *Romish* Emissary) pretended to be a *Jew Converted*; and seeking a pure Church, under that *vizor*, designing to overthrow (*by private insinuations*,) the Faith of the simple, uncautious Admirers! by such Instruments Satan works, where he hath opportunity.

See the Narration called The false Jew.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Of Satan's improving these Advantages for Errour. 1. *By deluding the Understanding directly: which he doth* (1.) *by countenancing Errour from Scripture. Of his cunning therein.* (2) *By specious pretences of Mysteries; and what these are. Of personal flatteries.* (3.) *By affected Expressions. Reason of their prevalency.* (4) *By bold Assertions. The Reasons of that Policy.* (5) *By the excellency of the Persons appearing for it, either for Gifts or Holiness. His method of managing that design.* (6.) *By pretended Inspiration.* (7) *By pretended Miracles. His cunning herein.* (8) *By peace and prosperity in ways of Errour.* (9) *By lyes against Truth, and the Professors of it.*

WHat are the *general Advantages* which Satan hath to forward his design of Errour we have seen. It now remains, that we take an account of the various ways, by which he improves those Advantages, and those may be referred to *two* Heads. (1) They are such Stratagems, as more *directly* work upon the Understanding to *delude* and blind it. Or (2) they are such as *indirectly* by the power of the *Will* and *Affections* do *influence* it.

First, Those Stratagems, that more immediatly concern the Understanding, are the use of such *Arguments*, which carry in them a *probability* to confirm an Errour; though indeed they are but *Fallacies*, *Sophisms*, or *Paralogisms*: of which the *Apostle* speaks, *Col.* 2. 4. *Lest any beguile you*, — that is, lest they impose upon you, by *false Reasonings*. His usual way of proceeding in this case is,

First, When he hath to do with Men that are brought up with profession

profession and belief of Scripture; he is then careful to give an Errour some countenance or pretence from *Scripture*: it is not his course to *decry* the Scriptures with such Men, but to *suppose* their Truth and Authority, as the most plausible way to his Design: for by this means he doth not only *prevent* a great many startling objections, which would otherwise rise up against him, (seeing Men brought up with Scripture, cannot easily be brought to call them false,) but with considerable advantage, he doth thereby *authorize* and justifie his Errour: for nothing can give more boldness or confidence to a mistake, then a belief that it is backed with Scripture.

That this is one of his grand Stratagems, may be sufficiently evinced from the infinite number of Errours that pretend to *Scripture warrant*. Those that are above, or beyond Scripture, (which acknowledg no dependance upon it) are but few, and rare: and indeed, among *Christians*, Errour cannot well thrives without a pretence of Scripture. Men would have enough to do to perswade *themselves* to such Errours, but it would be impossible to make a *Party* or perswade others; such Errours would presently be hissed out of the World. Upon this account is it, that *Atheism sculks* and conceals it self, (except where generally tolerated Prophaneness gives it more than ordinary encouragement,) which is not to be ascribed to any *shame-faced modesty*, that *Atheisms* can be supposed to nourish; but to the *general dislike* of others, who so stick to the Authority of the *Bible*, that they reject all direct contradictions to it with great abhorrency. Hence also it is, that some Erroneous persons are forced to *contradictions* in their *practice* against their professed *Principles*, because they find it impossible to propagate their Errours, without some pretence or other to Scripture. They that would undermine those Sacred Records, are forced to make use of their Authority for proof of what they would say. The *Papists* have a *quarrel* at them, and envy them the title of *Perfection* and *Perspicuity*, upon design to intoduce *Traditions*, and to set up the *Popes* Judicial Authority in matters of Faith; and when they have said all they can, to subject the Scriptures to the *Popes* Determination, they are forced at last to be beholden to the *Scriptures*, to prove the *Popes Determination*: they would prove the *Scriptures* by the *Church*; and then the *Church* by the *Scriptures*: which is a *Circle* they have been often told of, and of which, some of the wiser sort among themselves

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are ashamed. Others also, that will not allow the *Scriptures* to be a *general standing Rule*, are yet forced to make it (in some cases) a *Rule* to *themselves*, and eagerly plead it to be so to *others*. They that pretend to be *above Ordinances*, and decry *outward-Teachings* as unnecessary, or hurtful: yet, they *Teach outwardly*, because they see they are not able to enlarge the *Empire* of Errour, without such teaching. Those very Errours that make it their chief business, to render the *Scriptures* no better than *an old Almanack*; they yet seek to *Scripture* to countenance their Blasphemous Assertions; and if they get any scrap or shread of it, that may by their *unjust Torture* be wrested to speak any such thing, 2 Pet. 3. 16.
or any thing toward it, they think all their follies are thereby *patronized*; and commonly, such Men either fix upon such places as give warning of the necessary *concomitances* of the Spirit, and *Heart*, with the outward *Act* of service; (and from hence, separating what God hath joyned together, they set up *Spiritual* Sabbaths, *Spiritual* Baptism, *Spiritual* Worship, to cry down, and cashier the *external Acts* of such Ordinances:) or they pretend *kindred* to *Scripture*, as prophesying, or foretelling those *new* Administrations which they *are about to set up*. Let *H. Nicholas* be an instance of this, who though he decryed the Service of the *Law* under God the Father, and the Service of the *Belief* under Christ; and in the room of both these, would set up another Administration, under the Spirit; yet, (that he might be the better believed) he applyed several *Scriptures* to his purpose, as *Prophetically* foretelling *H. Nicholas*, and his services; and would have Men imagine, that he was *that Angel flying in the midst of Heaven with the Everlasting Gospel*, Rev. 14. 6. *And that Prophet enquired after by the Jews*, Joh. 1. 21. *Art thou that Prophet*, and *that Man ordained to Judg the World?* Act. 17. 31. And that the times of his Dispensation, were the times of Perfection, and Glory spoken of in 1 *Cor.* 13. 9. and *Heb.* 6. 1. The like pretences for new Administrations had *Saltmarsh*, and several others.

Satan fixing his Foot upon this Design, and taking advantage of Mens Ignorance, Curiosity, and Pride, *&c.* it is impossible to tell what he may do; he hath introduced many Heresies already, and none knows what may be behind; many passages of Scripture are *dark*, to the *wisest* of Men: a great many more are so to the *common* sort of Christians. A great many wits are imployed

ployed by him, as *Adventurers* for *new Discoveries*; and a small pretence is ground enough for a bold Undertaker to erect a new Notion upon; and a new Notion in Religion, is like a new Fashion in Apparel, which bewitcheth the unsteady with an itch to be in it, before they well understand what it is: So that 'tis alike impossible to *stint* the just *number* of Errours, as to *adjust* the various *pretences* from Scripture upon which they may be countenanced. Leaving therefore this task to those that can undertake it, I shall only note a particular or two of Satans cunning in affixing an Errour upon Scripture.

First, In any grand design of Error, he endeavours to lay the *Foundation* of it as *near to Truth* as he can; but yet so, that in the *tendency* of it, it may *go as far from it* as may be. As some Rivers whose first *Fountains* are *contiguous*, have notwithstanding a direct *contrary* course in their Streams. For instance, in those Errors that tend to overthrow the doctrine of the Gospel, concerning *Christ* and *Ordinances* (and these are things which the Devil hath a great spite at) he begins his work with plausible pretences of *Love* and *Admiration* of *Christ* and *Grace*; he proceeds from thence to the pretence of *purer Enjoyments*, from thence to a *dislike* of such Preachers and Preaching, as *threaten Sin*, and speak out the *wrath* of God against Iniquity, and these are presently called *Legal Preachers*, and the doctrine of Duty a *Legal Covenant*; having them once at this point, they easily come to *immediate Assistances*, and *special Gifts*, which they pretend to have above others; being thus set up, they are for free Grace, and the enjoyment of God *in Spirit*; from thence they come to *Christian Liberty*, and by degrees Duties are *unnecessary*, there is *no Christ* but *within them*, and being *freed* from the Law, whatever they do is *no Transgression*. This is a Path that Satan hath trodden of old, though now and then he may vary in some Circumstances, and be forced to stop before he come to the utmost of his Journey. You may observe this Method in the *late Errors* of *New-England*, in the *Familists* of *Germany*, and in those of *Old-England*; in all which at the long-run Men are led as far from Scripture, as Darkness is from Light. Now this is not only to be seen in a *progressive multiplication* of Errors, but often may we perceive the same subtilty of Satan in a *simple Error*, as when he takes up *part* of a Truth which should stand in *conjunction* with another, and sets it up *alone* against its own *Companion*, where we shall have the *name* and pretence *kept up*, but the *thing* quite *destroyed*.

See the Book called Wonder Working Providence *for* New-England.

stroyed. God requires *Services* of Men, and prescribes to their use, Prayer, Hearing, Sacraments, but because in these God is dishonoured when Men only draw near with their Lips, he further tells us, *that he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that Circumcision which is of the Flesh*, &c. This part are some Men so fixed upon, that they think they are discharged of *the other*, and in practice go quite from *these duties*, and yet still they profess they are *for Ordinances* and the *Worship of God*; just so are some Men *for Christ*, but then 'tis but the *name*, not the *thing*; they own Christ they say, but then 'tis *Christ in them*, and *Christ come in their Flesh*, but not that Christ *that died at Jerusalem*, as a Sacrifice for the Sins of Men.

Secondly, Satan takes great care that an Errour be (in all the ways of its propagation) *cloathed with Scripture phrases*; and *the less* the Errour can pretend to any plausible ground of Scripture, the more doth he endeavour to adorn it with Scripture *Language*, (I understand this chiefly of such Errors, as are designed for the *Multitude*) so that though Scripture be not used to *prove* the Errour, yet are Deceivers taught to *express* their *conceptions* by it, and to *accomodate* the Words and Sentences of it to their purposes; for besides pride and confidence, *Scriptural Eloquence* is a necessary ingredient to make a *powerful Deluder*. Observe the *Ring-leaders* of Errors, and you shall find that ordinarily, such have at first been *studious* of the Scriptures; and though never able to *digest* them, yet when they *turned their Ears from Truth*, they have carried their *Scripture Language* (which they had before brought themselves unto by long custom) away with them, and still retain it, and express their Opinions by it.

Now this is a great advantage to Satan. For First, By this means the *ignorant* Multitude are often caught without any more ado; if they hear Scripture Expressions they are apt to think that *all is Truth* which is spoken *by them*; and they the rather believe it, because they will imagine such Teachers to be *well versed* in Scripture, and consequently either so *honest*, or so *knowing* that they neither *can*, nor *will* delude them. Secondly, There is a *Majesty* in Scripture which (in some sence) doth *stick* to the very *expressions* of it; Men may perceive that generally Hearers are more *affected* with *Scripture Eloquence*, than with *Play-Book Language*; it hath (as it were) a charm in the words, which makes the Ear attentive, more than a quaint discourse, starched up in the dress of

of common Rhetorick: One gives us an Obſervation to that purpoſe of his own Preaching, and ſo may many others. While then Men hear ſuch language, they have a reverence to it. And as Phyſitians cover their Pills with Gold that the Patient might more willingly take them; ſo do Men often ſwallow down Errour without due conſideration, becauſe conveyed to them in a Language which they reſpect.

Savonarola triumph. Crucis. *lib.* 2, *c.* 2.

Secondly, Satans ſecond care for the advancement of Errour, (after he hath given it all the countenance he can from Scripture) is to gild it over with *ſpecious pretences*, he ſets it off with all the bravery he can, and then urgeth that as an Argument of its Truth. Men are apt to judg that what doth *better* their Spiritual Condition cannot be a *Lye* or deluſion; and the Argument were the more conſiderable, if the advantages were *ſuch* as he *pretends* them to be: but the very *noiſe* and boaſt of advantages *pleaſe* the unwary, without a due enquiry into their reality. The Apoſtle in *Rom.* 16.18. reduceth all this Policy of the Deceiver to two heads: (1.) *Good words*, χρηϛολογίας, words that ſet out the *profit* and *advantage* of the thing. (2.) And *fair Speeches* εὐλογίας, Speeches that flatter the *Condition* of the party. His Art, as to the *firſt* of theſe, is to tell them that the Notions offered to them are *ſpecial Diſcoveries*, *rare Myſteries*, which have been hidden from others; and thence infers, that it muſt of neceſſity conduce much to their *happineſs*, and Spiritual *Perfection* to know and embrace them. Thoſe that troubled the Church in *Pauls* days with falſe Doctrines, uſed this ſlight of boaſting, as appears by that expreſſion in 1 *Tim.* 6.20. *Oppoſitions of Science*; it ſeems they called their opinions (though they were but *prophane*, and *vain-bablings*) by the name of *Science* or *Knowledg*, implying that all others, even the Apoſtles themſelves were *in the Dark*, and came ſhort of their *Illumination*. The like we have in *Rev.* 2.24. of that abominable Propheteſs *Jezebel*, who recommended her blaſphemous filthy Doctrines, under the name of *Depths*, Profundities, or hidden Knowledg, though the Spirit of God told that Church they were not ſuch; but *if Depths*, they were *depths of Satan*, (as 'tis added there by way of Correction) and not of the Spirit of God. We may trace theſe *footſteps* of Satan in all *conſiderably* prevailing Errors: for what hath been more common than to hear Men ſpeak of the deſigns they have been carrying on, under the ſpecious Titles *Of Chriſt's coming to ſet up a Righteous Kingdom*; *The Churches coming out of Babylon*,

lon, and out of the Wilderness; *the dawning of the day of the Lord*; *the day of Reformation, the time of the Restitution of all things*; with abundance of Brags of the same kind. I shall add no particular Instance of this nature; but a few strains of *H. Nicholas*, with whom such high promising vaunts were ordinary. His Service of Love, he compares to the *most Holy*, (whereas *Johns* Doctrine of Repentance was but a preparation to the *Holy*; and the *Service of Christ* he allowed to be no more than as the *Holy* of the Temple) this his Service he calls, *the perfection of Life*, *the completion of Prophecies*, *the perfect conclusion of the Works of God*, *the Throne of Christ*, *the true Rest of the Chosen of God*, *the last Day*, *the sure Word of Prophecy*, *the New Jerusalem*, and what not?

If we make further enquiry into the *nature* of these fair promising Mysteries, we shall find that Satan most frequently pitcheth upon these *three*. First, He befools Men into a belief, that the Scriptures do under the *Vail* of their Words and Sentences, contain some *hidden Notions*, that are *of purpose* so disguised, that they may be *locked up* from the generality of Men, at least from *learned* and wise Men; and that these Rarities cannot be discerned from the *usual significations* of the Words and Phrases, (as we understand other Books of the same Language) but they fancy these Sacred Writings to be like the Writings of the *Ægyptians*, by which they absconded their Mysteries, especially like that kind of Writing, whereby under words of *common known sence*, they intended things which the *Words themselves could not signify*; and that which occasions this imagination is this, that we read frequently of *Mysteries* in Scriptures, and *hidden Wisdom*, and the *special Revelation* of them to God's Children, which are very great Truths, but yet not to be so understood, as this Delusion supposeth: for these expressions in Scripture intend no more than this, that the *design* of God to *save Man by Christ* is in it self a *Mystery*, which never would have been *found out* without a *special Revelation*; and that though this Mystery is *now revealed* by the Gospel, yet as to the *application* of it to the Hearts of Men in *Conversion*, by the Operation of the Spirit, it is *yet a Mystery*. But none of these intend any such suggestion, that there are private Notions of *Truth* or *Doctrine* that are lying *under ground* (as it were) in Scripture words, which the words in the *common Language* will *not acquaint* us withal; nay, the contrary is expresly affirmed, when we are told that all is *plainly* laid open to the very *simple*, so that from the Scriptures they may

As Ibis a scarabeo accipitris pulchritudinem participat: *by which they signified the Moon borrowing its Light from the Sun.*

as well underſtand the *fundamental* principles of Religion, as they may underſtand *any other* thing which their language doth expreſs to them.

However in this Satan takes advantage of Mens *Pride* and *Curioſity*, to make them forward in the *acceptation* of ſuch offers, eſpecially when ſuch things are repreſented, as the *only ſaving diſcoveries* which a Man cannot be ignorant of but with hazard of Damnation.

Secondly, In this boaſt of Myſtery, Satan ſometimes takes another courſe ſomewhat differing from the former, and that is to put Men upon *Allegorical reflections* and alluſions, by which the *Hiſtorical* Paſſages of Scripture are made (beſides the import of the Hiſtory) *reſemblances* of ſpiritual Truths; which ſuppoſeth the *Letter* of Scripture to be *true*,(but ſtill as no better than the *firſt Rudiments* to train up Beginners withal,) yet withal, that the *ſpiritual meaning* of it raiſeth the skilful to a higher Form in Chriſt's School. At this rate all are turned into Allegories. If they fall upon the *firſt of Geneſis*, they think they then truly underſtand it,when they apply the *Light* and *Darkneſs*,and God's *ſeparating* of them, with ſuch other Paſſages, to the *regeneration* of the Soul. The like work make they with the *Sufferings* of Chriſt. But then the crafty Adverſary at laſt enticeth them on to *let go the Hiſtory*,as if it were nothing but a *Parable*, not really acted, but only fitted to *repreſent* Notions to us. *Allegories* were a *Trap* which the Devil had for the *Jews*, and wherein they wonderfully pleaſed themſelves. How much *Origen* abuſed himſelf and the Scriptures by this humour is known to many; and how the Devil hath prevailed generally by it upon giddy people in later times,I need not tell you.

The pretence that Satan hath for this dealing is raiſed from ſome paſſages of the *New Teſtament*, wherein many things of the *Old Teſtament* are ſaid to have had a *Myſtical* ſignification of things expreſſed or tranſacted then, and ſome things are expreſly called *Allegories*. Hence *Papiſts* determine the Scripture to have, beſides the *Grammatical* Sence, (which all of us do own) and beſides the *Tropological* ſence (which is not divers or diſtinct from the Grammatical; as when from Hiſtories, we deduce inſtructions of holy and ſober carriage) an *Allegorical* and *Analogical* ſenſe: in which dealing Men conſider not, that the *Spirit* of God his interpreting a *paſſage or two* allegorically, will never juſtify any Mans *boldneſs* in preſuming to do the like to any *other paſſage* of Scripture; and beſide,

side, when any hath tryed his skill that way, another may with *equal probability* carry the same Scripture to a *different interpretation*, and by this means, the Scripture shall not only become *obscure*, but altogether *uncertain* and doubtful, and unable to prove any thing; so that this doth extreamly dishonour Scripture, by making it little less than ridiculous. *Porphyry*, and *Julian* made themselves sport with it, upon the occasion of *Origens* allegorizing, and no wonder, seeing that humour (as one calls it) is no better than a *learned Foolery*. Notwithstanding this, Men are sometime transported with a strange delight in turning all into Allegories, and *picking* Mysteries out of some *by-passages* and circumstances of Scripture, where one would least expect them: which I can ascribe to no second cause more, than to the working and power of *Fancy*, which as it can frame *Ideas* and Images of things, out of that that affords no real likeness or proportion, (as Men that create to themselves *Similitudes* and Pictures in the *Clouds* or in the *Fire*) so doth it please it self in its *own work*, and with a kind of natural affection, it doth kiss and hug its *own Baby*. It hath been my wonder sometimes to see how fond Men have been of their own Fancies, and how extreamly they have *doted* upon a very *bauble*. I might note you examples of this, even to nauseousness, in all Studies, as well as in this of Religion. Those that affect the *sublimities of Chymistry*, do usually by a strange boldness stretch all the sacred Mysteries of Scripture (as of the *Trinity*, of *Regeneration*, &c.) to represent their *Secrets* and *Processes*, as may be seen sufficiently in their Writings: One of them I cannot forbare to name, and that is *Glauber*; who doth so please himself with some idle *whims* about *Sal* and *Sol*, that at last he falls in with *Bernardinus Gomesius*, (whom he cites and approves) who in this one word ἅλς (which signifies *Salt*) finds the *Trinity*, the *Generation* of the Son, the *two natures* of Christ, the *calling* of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, the *procession* of the Spirit, and the *communications* of the Spirit in the *Law* and *Gospel*, and all this he gathers from the *shapes*, *stroaks* and *positions* of these three Letters: a very subtile invention! Not unlike to this, were some of the dotages of the *Jewish Cabala*, which they gathered from the *different writing* of some Letters in the sacred Text, from the *transposing* of them, and from their *Mystical Arithmetick*. *R. Elias* from the letter *Aleph*, mentioned six times in *Gen.* 1. 1. collected his Notion of the Worlds continuance for 6000 years, because that letter א stands for *a thousand* in the Hebrew

Whittaker de s. lit. sententia adv. Duræum. *lib.* 2. *p.* 88. Parum a docta quadam insania discrepat.

Vid. Lumen Chymicum. Crollii Basil. Chymic. in prefatione. Glauber de signatura Salium. *p.* 31. 38.

Lud. Cappelli Spec. in Eph. 6.19.

brew computation. Another *Rabbi* (mentioned by *Lud. Cappellus*) hath a profound ſpeculation concerning the *firſt letter of Geneſis*, which (as he ſaith) doth therefore begin with *Beth*, and not with *Aleph*, to ſhew the *unexceptionable verity of God's Word*, againſt which no Mouth can juſtly open it ſelf, and this he gathers from the manner of the pronunciation of that letter ב, which is performed by the cloſure of the Lips. It were not poſſible to imagine, that *wiſe* Men ſhould be thus carried away with *childiſh* Follies, if there were not ſome kind of *inchantment* in Fancy, which makes the *hit* of a *Conceit*, (though never ſo ſilly) intoxicate them into an *apprehenſion* of a *rare Diſcovery*. And doubtleſs this is the very thing that doth ſo tranſport the Allegorizers and Inventers of Myſteries, that they are raviſhed either with the diſcovery of a *New-nothing*, or with the rare invention of an *Ænigmatical* Interpretation.

Thirdly, The Devil hath yet another way of *coining* Myſteries, and that is a pretence of a *more full* diſcovery of Notions and Ways, which (as he tells thoſe that are willing to believe him,) are but *glanced* at in the Scripture; and this doth not only contain his boaſt of *unfolding Prophecies*, and the dangerous applications of them to Times and Places that are no way concerned, (which hath more than once put Men upon dangerous undertakings) but alſo his *large promiſe of teaching the Way of the Lord more perfectly*, and of leading Men into a *full comprehenſion* of thoſe *tremendous Myſteries*, wherein the Scripture hath *as induſtriouſly* concealed the *Reaſons*, *Way*, and *Manner of their Being*, as it hath *fully aſſerted* that they are, (ſuch are the *Decrees* of God, the *Trinity*, &c.) as alſo of unfolding and teaching *at large* thoſe things that the Scripture ſeems only to *hint at*. In all which points we have inſtances enough at hand, which will ſhew us how the Devil hath played his Game, either by making Men *bold* in things *not revealed*, or by drawing Men to *diſlike ſolid* Truths, and by puffing them up with notions, till at laſt they were prepared for the impreſſion of ſome grand Deluſion. All this while I have only explained the *firſt head* of Satan's ſpecious pretences, which conſiſts in the promiſe of Diſcoveries and Myſteries.

χρηστολογίαι, good words.

εὐλογίαι, fair Speeches.

The next head of pretences, are thoſe that relate to the *perſons* inamoured with theſe ſuppoſed Myſteries. With theſe he ſtrokes their heads, and cauſeth them to hug themſelves in a Dream of an imaginary happineſs. For if they have the knowledg of Myſte-

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ries which are locked up from other Men, they cannot avoid this Conclusion, *That they are the only Favourites of Heaven; that they only have the Spirit, are only taught of God*, &c. Such swelling words of vanity have ever accompanied Delusion. And indeed, we shall find the confidence of such Men *more strong*, and their false embracements *more rapturous*, than *ordinarily* the ways of Truth do afford, upon this account; that in such cases, Fancy is *elevated*, and the delights of a *raised Fancy* are *excessive*, and *Enthusiastical*. 'Tis a kind of Spiritual *Frenzy*, which extends all the Faculties to an extraordinary Activity; the Devil doing all he can to further it, by his utmost Contributions. Joy, delight, hope, love, are all raised to make an *hubbub* in the heart; whereas on the contrary, *Truth is modest, humble, sober*, and affords a *more silent joy*, though more *even* and *lasting*.

Here might I set Errour before you in its *rant*, and give you a taste of the *high flown straines* of it. *Montanus* (as vile as he was) had the confidence to call himself the *Comforter*. *Novatus* and his Brother would be no less than *Moses* and *Aaron*. The *Gnosticks* called themselves the *Illuminati*. The *Swinkfeildians* assumed the title of the *Confessors of the Glory of Christ*. The *Family of Love* had their *Evangelium Regni*, the Gospel of the Kingdom. The *Fratricelli*, distinguished themselves from others by the term *Spiritual*. *Muntzer* asserted, That all of his Opinion, *were Gods Elect*: and that all the Children of their *Religion* were to be called *the Children of God*; and that all others were *ungodly*, and designed to *Damnation*. *H. Nicholas* affirms, That there was *no knowledg of Christ nor Scripture, but in his Family*. To this purpose most of them speak, that forsake the wayes of Truth; and though these swellings are but *wind* and *vapour*, yet those *heights* are very *serviceable* to the Devils purposes: who by this means *confirms* those whom he hath already *Conquered*, and then fits them out with the greater confidence to allure others; and Men are apt enough to be drawn by fair shews, and confident boastings. But I proceed.

The third Stratagem of Satan for promoting Errour, is *to astonish Men with strange Language, and affected expressions*. It was an old device of Satan to coyn an *unintelligible gibberish* as the proper *vehicle* of strange *Enthusiasticks* Doctrine, and this he artificially suits to his pretended Mysteries; without this his rare Discoveries would be too flat and dull to gain upon any Man

of competent understanding. For if these *Dotages* were cloathed in *plain words*, they would either appear to be *direct non-sence*, or *ridiculous folly*. It concerns him when he hath any feats of Delusion in hand, to set them off with a *canting speech*, as juglers use their hard words, of *Ailif*, *Casyl*, *Zaze*, *Presto*, *Millat*, &c. to put their ignorant Admirers into a belief of some unknown power by which they do their Wonders. And this is in some sort necessary; extraordinary matters are above expression, and such *wild expressions* put Men into an expectation of things *sublime*. This *knack* Satan hath constantly used. *Montanus* had his strange Speeches. And all along downward to our times, we may observe, That Errour hath had this gaudy dress; the *Familists* especially abound with it, you may read whole Books full of such a kind of speaking, as the Book called *Theologia Germanica*, or *German Divinity*; the Books of *Jacob Behmen*, *The bright Morning Star*, &c. Neither are the *Papists* free; one of late hath taken the paines to shew them this, and other follies: among them you may find such talk as this, of being *beclosed in the mid-head of God, and in his meek-head*; *of being substantially united to God, of being oned to God*; *as also of the abstractedness of Life, of passive Unions, of the Deiform fund of the Soul*; *of a state of introversion: of a Super-essential life, a state of nothingness*, &c. Just like the raveings of *H. Nicholas*, *David George*, and others, who confidently discourse of being *godded with God*, of being *consubstantiated with the Deity*, and of *Gods being manned with them*.

Dr. Stilling-fleet *Idolatry of the Church of* Rome.

I have oft considered, what reason might be given for the *takeingness* of such expressions, and have been forced to satisfie my self with these: First, Many mistake the knowledg of *words*, for the knowledg of *things*. And well may poor ignorant Men believe, they have attained, no man knows what, by this device; when among Learned Men, the Knowledg of *words* is esteemed so great a pitch of Learning, and they nourish a great many Controversies that are only *verbal*. Secondly, Some are pleased to be accounted *Understanders* by others, and rest in such high words, as a *badge* of Knowledge. Thirdly, Some are delighted with such an hard Language upon an hope, That it will lead them to the knowledg of the *things* at last: they think *strange* expressions, are a sign of *deep* Mysteries. I knew one, that set himself to the reading of *Jacob Behmens* Books, (though at present

he confessed, he was scarce able to make common sense of three lines together,) upon a secret enticement that he had from the Language, to come to some *excellent* discovery, by much pains and reading. Fourthly, Some that have their Fancies *heated*, have by this means broken *confused impressions* of strange things in their imaginations, and conceive themselves to know things beyond what common Language can express: as if with *Paul*, rapt up into the third Heaven, *they hear, and see Wonders unutterable*. But what reason soever prevails with Men to take up such a way of speaking, Satan makes them believe, that it containes a rich *Mine* or Treasury, not of common Truths, but of extraordinary *Profundities*.

Dicas eos mera tonitrua sonare, nam communi sermone spreto, exoticum nescio quod idioma sibi fingunt, visi sunt suos discipules supra cœlum rapere. *Calvin.* in *Jud.* 13.

Fourthly, In stead of Argument to confirm an Errour, sometimes we have only *bold Assertions, that it is Truth*, and a confident condemning the contrary as an Errour; urging the danger of Mens rejecting it, *backed with threatning of Hell and Damnation*: and all this in the words of Scripture. To be sure they are right, and all other Men are wrong. This kind of confidence and fiercenesss hath been still the complexion of any remarkable way of Delusion; for that commonly *confines* their Charity to their own *Party*, (which is a great token of an Errour) not only may you observe in such extraordinary *Proclamations of Wrath* against those that will not believe them: (a practice used by the Mad *Fanaticks* of *Munster*; who, (as our *Quakers* were wont to do) go up and down the streets, crying, *Wo, wo; Repent, repent; come out of* Babylon; *the heavy Wrath of God; the Axe is laid to the root of the Tree.*) But in their more setled Teaching, they pronounce all to be *Antichrist*, and of the *carnal Church*, that do oppose them. Take for this *H. Nicholas* his words, *all Knowledg* (besides his) *is but witchery and blindness, and all other Teachers, and Learners, are a false Christianity, and the Devils Synagogue; a nest of Devils, and wicked Spirits; a false Being, the Antichrist, the Kingdom of Hell, the Majesty of the Devil*, &c. This piece of Art, not only our *Quakers*, (to whom nothing is more familiar, than to say to any opposer, *Thou art Damn'd, thou art in the Gall of bitterness, the Lake of fire and brimstone is prepared for thee*, &c.) but also the *Papists* commonly practise, who *shut all out of Heaven* that are not of *their Church*; and when they would affright any from Protestanism, they make not nice to tell him,

That there is no *possibility of Salvation*, but in their way.

The Reasons of this Policy are these, (1) The Heart is apt to be *startled* with threatnings, and *moved* by commands; especially, those that are of a more *tender* and frightful Spirit: and though they know nothing by themselves, yet these beget fears, which may *secretly* betray Reason, and make Men leave the right way because of affrightment. (2) The *confidence* of the Assertors of such things, hath also its *prevalency*: for Men are apt to think that they would not speak so, if they were not *very certain*, and had not *real experience* of what they said: and thus are Men *threaped* out of their own Perswasions. (3) The *native Majesty* of Scripture, in a business of so great *hazard*, adds an unexpressible force to such threatnings: and though (being *misapplyed*) they are no more *Scripture Threatnings*; yet, because God hath spoken his displeasure in *those words*, Men are apt to *revere* them: as Men cannot avoid to fear a Serpent or Toad, (though they know the Sting and Poyson were taken out) because Nature did furnish them with a Sting or Venom.

Fifthly, 'Tis an usual trick of Satan to derive a credit and honour to Errour, from the excellencies (supposed, or real) of the *Persons* that more eminently appear for it. So that it fetcheth no small strength from the qualities of those that propagate it. The Vulgar (that do not usually dive deep into the Natures of Things) content themselves with the most *Superficial* Arguments, and are sooner won to a good conceit of any Opinion, by the respects they carry to the Author, than by the *strongest Demonstration*.

The excellencies that usually move them, are either their *gifts* or their *holiness*. If the Seedsmen of an Errour be *Learned*, or *Eloquent* and *Affectionate* in his speaking, Men are apt to *subscribe* to any thing he shall say, from a blind *devotional admiration* of the Parts wherewith he is endowed. And often, where there is no Learning, or where Learning is decryed, (as savouring too much of Man) if there be *Natural fluency* of speech, with a sufficient measure of *confidence*, it raiseth them so much the *higher* in the esteem of the common sort, who therefore judge him to be immediately taught of God, and *divinely* furnished with gifts. At this point began the Divisions of the Church of *Corinth*, they had several Officers severally gifted; some were taken with one Mans gift, others with another Mans; some are

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for *Paul*, as being *profound*, and nervous in his Discourses; others for *Apollo*, as *Eloquent*; a third sort were for *Cephas*, as (suppose) an *Affectionate* Preacher: thus upon *personal respects* were they divided into Parties. And if these several Teachers were of different Opinions, their adherents imbraced them upon an *affectionate conceit* of their Excellencies. And generally Satan hath wrought much by such considerations as these. This he urgeth against Christ himself, when he set up the wisdom and learning of the Rulers and Pharisees, as an argument of Truth in their way of rejecting such a *Messias*; *Joh*. 7. 48. *Have any of the Rulers, or of the Pharisees believed on him?* There is no insinuation more frequent than this; these are *learned*, *excellent*, *able Men*, and therefore what they say, or teach, is not to be disbelieved; and though this be but *Argumentum stultum*, a foolish Argument, yet some that would be accounted wise, do make very great use of it. The crack of *Learned Doctors* among the Papists, is one *Topick* of perswasion to Popery, and so to other Errours, as appears by this, That all Errours abound with large declamations of the *praises* of their *Founders* and Teachers: and the most illiterate Errours usually magnifie the excellent *inspirements*, and gifts of utterance of their Leaders.

But the other excellency of *Holiness* in the Teachers of Errour, is more generally and more advantagiously improved by Satan, to perswade Men, that all is true Doctrine which such Men profess. Of this Delusion Christ forewarned us, *They shall come in Sheeps cloathing*; that is, under the mask of seeming holiness; (at least at first;) notwithstanding, *beware of them*, Math. 7. 15. Those complained of by *Paul*, 2 *Cor*. 11. 15. though they were *Satans Ministers*, yet that they and their Doctrine might be more plausibly entertained, they were *transformed as the Ministers of Righteousness*: this cunning we may espie in Hereticks of all ages. The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* used a pretence of *Sanctity* as a main piece of Art, to draw others to their way; their Alms, Fastings, long Prayers, strict Observations, *&c.* were all designed as a *Net* to catch the Multitude withal. The lying Doctrines of *Antichrist* were foretold by *Paul*, to have their success from this stratagem; all that Idolatry and Heathenism which he is to introduce, must be, (and hath been) through the *hypocrisie* of a *painted holiness*; and where he intends most to play the *Dragon*, he there most artificially counterfeits the *innocency* and simplicity of

1 Tim. 4. 2.
Rev. 13. 11.

the *Lamb*. *Arch-hereticks* have been *Arch-pretenders* to Sanctity. And such pretences have great influence upon Men: for Holiness and Truth are so near of kin, that they will not readily believe that it can be a *false Doctrine* which an *holy Man* Teacheth; they think that God that hath given a Teacher *Holiness*, will not deny him *Truth*: Nay, this is an easie and plausible *measure*, which they have for Truth and Errour. To enquire into the intricacies and depths of a Disputation, is too burdensome and difficult for ordinary Men, and therefore they satisfie themselves with this consideration, (which hath little toyl in it, and as little certainty) *That surely God will not leave holy Men to a delusion.* It would be endless to give all the instances that are at hand in this Matter; I shall only add a few things of Satans method in managing this Argument, as

First, When he hath a Design of *common*, or prevailing Delusion, he mainly endeavours to *corrupt* some person of a more *strict*, serious, and religious carriage, to be the *Captain* and Ringleader; such Men were *Pelagius*, *Arrius*, *Socinus*, &c. He mainly endeavours to have fit instruments. If he be upon that design of *blemishing* Religion, and to bring Truth into a dis-esteem; then (as one observes) he perswades such into the Ministry, as he fore-sees are likely to be *idle*, *careless*, *prophane*, and *scandalous*; or doth endeavour to *promote* such Ministers into more *conspicuous places*, and provokes them to miscarriage, that so their Example may be an Objection against Truth, while in the mean time, he is willing, that the Opposers of Truth should continue their smooth carriage; and then he puts a *Two-edged* Sword into the hands of the unstable: can that be Truth where there is so much Wickedness? and can this be Errour, where there is so much Holiness?

Acontius Stratagem-Satanæ. *Lib*.8.pag.406 *Oxon.*

Secondly, in Prosecution of this Design, he usually puts Men upon some more than *ordinary strictness*, that the pretence of holiness may be the more augmented; in this case a course of ordinary Sanctity is not enough, they must be above the common Practice; some singular *Additions* of severity and exactness above what is written, are commonly affected to make them the more remarkable. Christ notes this in the Pharisees, concerning all their Devotions, and the wayes of expressing them; their *Phylacteries* spoken of, *Mat*. 23. 5. (as some think) were not intended by that Text of *Deut*. 6. 8. but only that they should

Jerom.Theoph. Lyra. &c.

remember

remember the Law, and endeavour not to forget it; as they do that tye a thred, or such like thing about their Finger for a Remembrancer; according to *Prov.* 3.3. *Bind them about thy neck, write them upon the Table of thine heart.* However, if they were literally enjoyned, they would have them (as Christ tells them) *broader* than others, as an evidence of their greater care. The *Cathari* boasted of Sanctity and good Works, and rejected second Marriages; the *Apostolici* were so called, from a pretended stricter imitation of the singular holiness of the Apostles. The *Valesians* made themselves *Eunuches* (according to the Letter) *for the Kingdom of God.* The *Donatists* accounted that no true Church, where any spot or infirmity was found. The *Messalians* or *Euchytæ* were for constant praying. The *Nudipedales* for going bare-foot, *&c.* The *Papists* urge Canonical Hours, Whippings, Pennances, Pilgrimages, voluntary Poverty, abstinence from Meats, and Marriage in their Priests and Votaries. In a word, all noted Sects have something of special *singularity*, whereby they would difference themselves from others, as a peculiar *character* of their greater strictness; and for want of better stuff, they sometimes take up affected gestures, devotional looks, and outward garbs; all which have this note, That what they most stand upon, God hath least, or not at all *required at their hands*; their *voluntary Humility*, or *neglecting of the Body*, being but *will-worship*, and a self-devised piece of Religion.

Thirdly, When once Men are set in the way of exercising severities, Satan endeavours (by working upon their fancies) to press them on further to a *delight* and *satisfaction* in these * wayes of strictness, so that the practisers themselves are not only *confirmed* in these usages, and the opinions that are concomitant with them; but others are the more easily drawn to like and *profess* the same things. Any *serious* temper under any Profession of Religion, easily comes to be *devout*, and readily complies with opportunities of evincing its Devotion by strictness. And therefore we shall find among *Heathens*, a great devotional severity, and such as far exceeds all of that kind, which the *Papists* do usually brag of; the *Magi* abstained from Wine, eat not the flesh of living Creatures, and professed Virginity. The *Indian Brachmans* did the like, and besides used themselves to incredible hardship; they laid upon skins, sustained the violence of the Sun, and Storms, and exercised themselves therewith; some spending

*Atq; hac ratione seducta est, astu Satanæ, innumera hominum multitudo, quæ ut viam vitæ ambularet, arctam illam ingressa est, quæ instinctu Satanæ per humanas est ad inventionis inducta, posteaquam vidit Satan viam suam quæ ad mortem ducit, traduci, eò quod sit lata, & quod multi per illam ambulent, cæpissentq; quidam arctam & strictam quærere, quæ non tereretur à multis, callido consilio effecit, ut pro vera via vitæ, arriperetur ea, quæ quidem esset stricta via verò vitæ non esset, *&c.* Musculus in *Mat.* 7. 13.

Thirty

Thirty ſeven years in this courſe, others more. We read ſtrange things of this nature concerning the *Ægyptian* Prieſts, and others. The *Mahumetans* are not without their Religious Orders, which pretend a more holy and auſtere Life than others; and though of ſome (as of the *Torlachs* and *Dervizes*) ſeveral private Villanies are reported, yet of others, (as of the Order of *Calender*) we are aſſured from Hiſtory, That they profeſs Virginity, and expoſe themſelves to Hardſhip, and a ſtricter Devotion in their way; and generally 'tis ſaid, of all of them, That they go meanly clad, or half naked; ſome abſtinent in Eating, and Drinking, profeſſing Poverty, renouncing the World: ſome can endure cutting and ſlaſhing, as if they were inſenſible; ſome profeſs perpetual Silence, though urged with Injuries, and Tortures; others have Chains about their Necks and Arms, to ſhew, that they are bound up from the World, *&c.* If ſuch things may be found among *Heathens*, no wonder that Errour boaſts of them, for in both there is the ſame reaſon of Mens *pleaſing themſelves* in ſuch hardſhips (which is from a Natural Devotion, aſſiſted by Satans cunning,) and the ſame Deſign driven on by it; for the Devil doth confirm *Heathens* and *Mahumetans* in their falſe Worſhip, by the *reverence* and reſpect they carry to *ſuch* practices.

Fourthly, Becauſe Religious Holineſs hath a beauty in it, and is very lovely; he doth all he can to affect Men with the higheſt *reverence* for theſe *pretences* of Religious ſtrictneſs: ſo that they that will not be at *pains* to practiſe them, can beſtow an exceſſive reſpect and *admiration* upon thoſe that are grown *famous* in the uſe of ſuch things; and by that means, being almoſt adored, they are without doubt perſwaded, that all they teach or do is right, and in a doting fondneſs they multiply Superſtitious Errours. *Idolatry* is ſuppoſed to have a great part of its riſe from this: While Men endeavoured to expreſs their thankful and admiring *remembrances* of ſome excellent Perſons, by ſetting up their *Pictures*, their Poſterity began to worſhip them as *Gods*: Pilgrimages were firſt ſet on foot by the reſpects that Men gave to *places* that were made *famous* by Perſons and Actions of more than ordinary Holineſs: and becauſe the Devil found Men ſo very apt to pleaſe themſelves in paying ſuch Devotional *Reverences*, he wrought upon their Superſtitious humour to *multiply* to themſelves the *occaſions* thereof, and by fabulous Traditions ſent

Purchas Pilg. *Lib.* 1. cap. 10. out of *Euſebius*.

ſent them to places no otherwiſe made *memorable* than by Dreams and *Impoſtures*. Much of this you might ſee if you would accompany a *Caravan* from *Cairo* to *Mecca* and *Medina*, where you would ſee the zealous Pilgrims with a great many Oriſons and Prayers *compaſſing Abrahams* houſe; *kiſſing* a Stone, which (they are told) fell from Heaven, bleſſing themſelves with a *relique* of the old Veſture of Abrahams Houſe; *waſhing* themſelves in the Pond, which (as their Tradition goes) the *Angel* ſhewed to *Hagar*; *ſaluting* the Mountain of Pardons; throwing *Stones* in defiance of the Devil, as (their Legend tells them) *Iſmael* did; their Prayers on the *Mountain of Health*; their viſit to the *Prophets Tomb* at *Medina*, &c. The like might you obſerve among the *Papiſts*, in their Pilgrimages to *Jeruſalem* and the *Sepulchre*, to the *Lady* of *Loretto's* Chappel and other places. By ſuch devices as theſe the unobſervant people are tranſported with a *pleaſure*, inſomuch that they not only perſwade themſelves they are *very devout* in theſe Reverences, but they alſo become *unalterably fixed* to theſe Errours that do ſupport theſe *delightful* Practices, or as conſequences do iſſue from them. Vid. *Purchas* Pilg. 3. *chap*. 5.

Sixthly, A more plauſible Argument for Errour (than the Learning and Holineſs of the Perſons that profeſs it) is that of *Inſpiration*, in which the Devil ſoars a loft, and pretends the higheſt *divine* warrant for his falſhoods: for *God is Truth*, and *we know that no lye is of the Truth*. Now to make Men believe that God by his Holy Spirit doth in any manner *dictate* ſuch Opinions, or certainly *reveal* ſuch things for Truths: is one of the *higheſt* Artifices that he can pretend to, and ſuch a confirmation muſt it be (to thoſe that are ſo perſwaded,) that all diſputes and doubtings muſt neceſſarily be ſilenced.

That the Devil can thus *transform himſelf into an Angel of Light*, we are aſſured from Scripture, which hath particularly cautioned us againſt this cheat. The Apoſtacy of the later times, 1 *Tim*. 4. 1. the Apoſtle foretells ſhould be carried on by the prevalency of this pretence, *Some ſhall depart from the Faith, giving heed to ſeducing Spirits*. That by *Spirits* there, *Doctrines* are intended rather than *Doctors*, is *Mr. Medes* interpretation: but it will come all to one if we conſider that the word *Spirit* carryes more in it, than either *Doctrine* or *Doctor*; for to call either the one or the other *a Spirit* would be intollerably harſh, if it were not for this, that that *Doctor* is hereby ſuppoſed to pretend an *infallability* from the *Spirit of God*, or (which is all one) that he received his *Doctrine* by ſome Apoſtacy of the latter times. pag. 7.

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immediate Revelation of the Spirit; so that by *seducing Spirits* must be, *Men or Doctrines that seduce others to believe them, by the pretence of the Spirit, or Inspiration:* and that text of 1 *Joh.* 4. 1. doth thus explain it, *believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God*; which is as much as if he had said, believe not every *Man* or *Doctrine* that shall pretend he is *sent of God*, and hath *his Spirit*; and the reason there given makes it yet more plain, because many *false Prophets are gone out into the World:* So that these *Spirits* are *false Prophets*, Men that pretend inspiration. And the warning, *believe not every Spirit*, tells us, that Satan doth with such a dexterity *counterfeit* the Spirits Inspirations, that holy and good Men are in no small *hazard* to be deceived thereby. Most full to this purpose is that of 2 Thess. 2. 2. *That ye be not soon shaken in Mind, or be troubled, neither by Spirit, nor by Word, nor by* Letter *as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand*; where the several *means* of seduction are particularly reckoned, as distinct from the *Doctrine* and *Doctors*, and by Spirit can be meant no other than a pretence of Inspiration or Revelation.

Prideaux Orat. X. de-spir. Seductoribus.

'Tis evident then that Satan by this Artifice, useth to put a stamp of divine Warrant upon his adulterate Coyn; and if we look into his practice, we shall in all ages find him at this work. Among *Heathens* he frequently gained a repute to his superstitious Idolatrous worship by this device: The Men of greatest note among them feigned a *spiritual commerce* with the Gods. *Empedocles* endeavoured to make the people believe that there was a kind of *Divinity* in him, and affecting to be esteemed more than a Man, cast himself into the burnings of *Mongebel*, that they might suppose him to have been *taken up to the Gods*. *Pythagoras* his Fiction of a Journey to Hell was upon the same account. *Philostratus* and *Cedrenus* report no less of *Apollonius*, than that he had *familiar converses* with their supposed Dieties: and the like did they believe of their *Magi* and Priests; insomuch that some cunning *Politicians* (observing how the vulgar were under a deep reverence to such pretences) gave it out that they had received their *Laws* by *divine Inspirations*. *Numa Pompilius* feigned he received his Institutions from the *Nymph Ægeria*: *Lycurgus* from *Apollo*: *Minos* the Lawgiver of *Candy*, baosted that *Jupiter* was his Familiar. *Mahomet* also speaks as high this way as any, his *Alcoran* must be no less than a *Law* received *from God*, and to that end, he pretends a

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ſtrange Journey to Heaven, and frequent converſe with the Angel *Gabriel*.

If we trace Satan in the Errours which he hath raiſed up under the profeſſion of the Scriptures, we may obſerve the ſame method, the *Valentinians*, *Gnosticks*, *Montaniſts* talked as confidently of the Spirit, as *Moſes* or the Prophets could do, and a great deal more; for ſome of them blaſphemouſly called themſelves the *Paraclete*, or Comforter. Among the Monſters which later Ages produced, we ſtill find the ſame ſtrain; one ſaith he is *Enoch*, another ſtiles himſelf the *great Prophet*, another hath raptures, and all immediately inſpired. The *Papiſts* have as much of this cheat among them as any other, and ſome of their learned Defenders avouch their *Lumen Propheticum*, and *Miraculorum Gloria*, *Propheſies* and *Miracles*, to be the *two eyes*, or the Sun and Moon of their Church; nay by a ſtrange tranſportment of Folly, (to the forfeiture of the reputation of Learning and Reaſon) they have ſo *multiplied* Revelations, that we have whole *Volumns* of them, as the Revelations of their *Saint Brigit* and others; and by wonderful credulity they have not only advanced apparent *dreams* and dotages to the honour of *Inſpirations* or Viſions, but upon this *ſandy Foundation* they have built a great many of their *Doctrines*, as *Purgatory*, *Tranſubſtantiation*, *auricular Confeſſion*, &c. By ſuch warrants have they inſtituted *Feſtivals*, and *founded* ſeveral Orders; the particulars of theſe things you may ſee more at large in *Dr. Stillingfleet* and others. And that there might be nothing wanting that might make them ſhameleſly impudent, they are not content to *equal* their *Fooleries* with the Scriptures of God, as that the *rule* of their *St. Francis* (for I ſhall only inſtance in him, omitting others for brevity ſake) was not compoſed *by the Wiſdom of Man*, but by *God himſelf*, and *inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt*; but they advance *their* Prophets *above the Apoſtles*, and above *Chriſt* himſelf. Their *St. Benedict* (if you will believe them) was rapt up to the *third Heavens*, where he ſaw God *Face to Face*, and heard the choire of Angels; and their *St. Francis* was a *none-ſuch* for Miracles and Revelations. Neither may we wonder that Satan ſhould be forward in urging this cheat, when we conſider,

Firſt, What a *reverence* Men *naturally* carry to Revelations, and how apt they are to be ſurpriſed with an *haſty* credulity. An *old Prophecy*, pretended to be found in *a Wall*, or taken out of an *old Manuſcript* (of I know not what uncertain Author,) is uſually

more doted on, than the plain and infallible *rules* of Scripture: this we may observe daily, and Forreiners do much blame the *English* for a facile belief of such things, but it is a general fault of mankind, and we find even wise Men forward in their perswasions upon meaner grounds, than those that gain credit to old Prophecies. For their *antiquity* and *strangeness* of discovery, especially at such times wherein the present posture of Affairs seem to *favour* such predictions with a *probadility* of such events, are more likely to get credit, than these *artificial imitations* of the Ways and Garbs of the old Prophets, and the cunning *Legerdemain* of those that pretend to Inspirations, by *seeming Extasies*, Raptures, and confident Declarations, &c. nevertheless arrant Cheats, have by these ways deceived no mean Men. *Alvarus* acknowledgeth that he honoured a Woman as a Saint, that had Visions and Raptures, as if really inspired (and the same apprehensions had the *Bishop* and *Fryars*) who was afterward discovered to be a *naughty Woman:* who shall then think it strange that the unobservant Multitude should be deluded by such an Art?

Lib. 2. cap. 45. p. 87.

Secondly, Especially if we consider that God himself took *this course* to signify his mind to Men; his Prophets were *divinely inspired*, and the Scriptures were not of *any private interpretation:* the *words* that the Pen Men of Scriptures wrote, were not the *interpretations* of their own *private thoughts*; *for the Prophecy came not in old time by the will of Man, but holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*, 2 *Pet.* 1.20, 21. Now though the Prophecies of Scripture are *sealed*, and no more is to be *added* to them upon any pretence whatsoever; yet seeing there are Promises left us, of the *giving of the Spirit*, of *being taught* and *led by the Spirit*; it is an easy matter for Satan to beguile Men into an expectation of prophetick *inspirations*, and a belief of what is pretended so to be: for all Men do not, or will not understand, that these promises of the Spirit, have no intendment of *new* and *extraordinary* immediate *Revelations*, but only of the *efficacious applications* of what is *already revealed* in Scripture. This *kind* of Revelation we acknowledg and teach, which is far enough from *Enthusiasm*, (that is, a pretended *Revelation* of *new* Truths) and we have reason to assert, *that internal perswasions without the external word, are to be avoided as Satan's cozenages.* But for all this, when Mens minds are set a gadding, if they meet with such as magnify their own *Dreams*, and call their Fancies, *Visions*, the suitableness of this to their humour,

ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως.

Whitaker de Author. Script. contra Stapletonum. *lib.* 1. *cap.* 10. *p.* 121.

mour, makes them to reject our *interpretations* of these Promises as false, and to perswade themselves that they are to be understood of such Inspirations *as the Prophets of old had*; and then they presently conclude they are to *believe* them, lest otherwise they should *resist the Holy Ghost*.

Thirdly, But the *advantage* which the Devil hath to work *Delusion* upon by this pretence, is an high motive to him to practise upon it. For Inspirations, Visions, Voices, Impulses, Dreams, and Revelations are things wherein wicked *Impostors* may by many ways and artifices play the *counterfeits* undiscovered; 'tis *easy* to prophesy *false Dreams, and to say, thus saith the Lord*, when yet *they do but lye, and the Lord never sent them, nor commanded them*; nay Jer. 23. 31. 'tis easy by *tricks* and *illusions*, to put that honour and credit upon their *designs*, which they could not by their bare *assertions*, backed with all their art of seeming seriousness: the *inventions* of Men (that have been formerly successful in this deceit) being now *laid open* to our knowledg, may make us more wary in our trust. Among the *Heathens* you may find notable ways of deceits of this nature. The Story of *Hanno* and *Psappho* is commonly known, they tamed Birds, and learned them to speak, *Hanno and Psappho are Gods*; and then set them at liberty, that Men hearing such *strange voices* in the Woods from Birds, might imagine that these Men were declared *Gods* by special discovery. *Mahomets* device of making a *Dove* to come frequently to his Ear, (which he did, by training her up to an use of picking Corn out of it,) served him for an evidence (among the vulgar beholders, who knew not the true cause of it) of his immediate Inspiration by the *Angel Gabriel*, who (as he told them) whispered in his ear in the *shape of a Dove*. The like knavery he practised for the confirmation of the truth of his *Alcoran*, by making a Bull (taught before to come at a call or sign) to come to him, with a Chapiter upon his Horns. *Hector Boetius* tells us of a like stratagem of a King of *Scots*, who (to animate his fainting Subjects against the *Picts* that had beaten them,) caused a Man clothed in the *shining skins of Fishes*, and with rotten Wood (which as a Glow-worm in the Night, represents a faint Light) to come among them in the dark, and through a *Reed* or hollow Trunk (that the Voice might not appear to be humane) to incite them to a vigorous onset: this they took to be an *Angel*, bringing them this command from Heaven, and accordingly fought and prevailed. Crafty *Benedict*, (who was afterward

Pope under the name of *Boniface the eighth*) made simple *Celestine the fifth* give over the *Popedom*, by conveying to him a Voice through a Reed to this purpose: *Celestine*, *Celestine*, *renounce the Papacy*, *give it over*, *if thou wouldst be saved*, *the burthen is beyond thy Strength*, *&c.* The silly Man taking this for a Revelation from Heaven, quitted his Chair and left it for that crafty Fox *Benedict*. Not very many years since, the same trick was played in this Country to *a Man of Revelations*, who called himself *David in Spirit*, when he had wearied his Entertainer with a long stay, he quitted himself of his Company, (as I was credibly informed) by a Policy which he perceived would well suit with the Man's conceitedness; for through a *Reed* in the *night time* he tells him, that he must go into *Wales*, or some such Country, and there preach the Gospel; the next Morning the Man *avouches a Revelation from God* to go elsewhere, and so departs. These instances shew you how cunningly a cheating knave may carry on a pretence of Revelation or Vision. And yet this is not all the advantage which the Devil hath in this matter, though it is an advantage which he sometime makes use of when he is fitted with suitable Instruments. But he works most *dangerously* when he so acts upon Men, that they *themselves* believe they have Visions, Raptures and Revelations, for some are *really* perswaded that it is so with them. Neither is it strange, that Men should be deluded into an apprehension that they hear and see what they do not; in *Feavers*, *Frenzies*, and *Madness*, we clearly see it to be so: and who can *convince* such Persons of their *mistakes*, when with as high a confidence as may be, they contend *that they are not deceived?* Shall we think it strange that Satan hath ways of conveying false apprehensions upon Mens minds? no surely, do we not see that the *Senses* may be cheated, and that the *Fancies* of Men may be corrupted? is it not easy for him to convey *Voices* to the Ear, or *shapes* and representations to the Eye? and in such cases, what can ordinarily hinder a belief that they hear or see such things? but he needs not always work upon the Fancy by the Senses. If he hath the advantage of a *crazy distempered Fancy* (as commonly he hath in *Melancholly Persons*) he can so *strongly fix* his suggestions upon them, and so *effectually* set the Fancy on work to *embrace* them, that without any appearance of Madness, they will perswade themselves that they have *discoveries* from God, *Impulses* by his Spirit, *Scriptures* set upon their Hearts, and what not? and because they *feel* the workings of these things

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things within them, it is impoſſible to make them ſo much *as ſuſpect* that they are deceived. Do but conſider the power of *any Fancy* in a *Melancholick* Perſon, and you may eaſily apprehend how Satan works in ſuch deluſions. Melancholy doth ſtrangely *pervert* the imagination, and will beget in Men wonderful miſapprehenſions, and that ſometimes doth bewitch them into peremptory *uncontroulable* belief of their Fancy ; 'tis a vehement, confident humour, what way ſoever it takes, the imagination thus corrupted hath an enormous *ſtrength*, ſo that if it fix upon things never ſo abſurd or irrational,'tis not reducible by the ſtrongeſt reaſons. If ſuch a Man conceits himſelf *dead*, or that he is *transformed* to a *Wolf* or Cat, or that he is made of *Glaſs* (as many in this Diſtemper have done;) there is no perſwaſion to the contrary,that can take place with him. Now if this humour be taken up with *Divine matters* (as uſually it doth, for it hath a *natural inclination to religious things*) it ſtill acts with *fierceneſs* and *confidence*, and there are many things often concomitant to ſuch actings, that if it miſconceit Inſpiration or Prophecy, the *Parties* themſelves are not only *bound up* under that perſwaſion, but even *unwary Spectators* are deluded. For ſometime a Melancholy *imagination* is not *wholly* corrupt, but only in reſpect of ſome *one* or *two* particulars,whilſt in *other* things it acts *regularly*, and then neither they nor others (that are unacquainted with ſuch caſes) are ſo apt to ſuſpect that they are *miſtaken* in theſe things, while they act *rationally* and *ſoberly* in *other* matters. Sometime they have vehement *fits of ſurpriſal* (for the humour hath its ebbings and flowings) and this gives them occaſion to apprehend that ſometing doth *ſupernaturally* act or raiſe them, and then when the things they ſpeak, are for the *matter* of them, of *religious concern*, and *odd notions* (for the humour flies high, and bounds not it ſelf with ordinary things,) and withal uttered in *Scripture Rhetorick* and with *fervency* and urgency of Spirit, when theſe things *concur*, there is ſuch an appearance of *Inſpiration*, that the Parties themſelves and others reſt fully perſwaded that it is ſo.

Seventhly, Pretended and counterfeit *Miracles* the Devil makes much uſe of, to countenance Errour, and this is alſo one of his ſtrong-holds; for he ſuggeſts that God himſelf *bears witneſs* by theſe Signs,Wonders,and Miracles to ſuch erroneous Doctrine, as ſeems to be concerned by them.

That

Miraculum voco, quicquid arduum aut insolitum, supra spem aut facultatem mirantis apparet. *Aug. de utilitat. cred. contra Manich.* cap. 16.

That the Devil cannot work a *true* Miracle hath been discoursed before, but that he can perform many *strange* things, and such as may beget admiration, none denies; and that by such unwonted actions, he usually endeavours to *justify* false Doctrines, and to set them off with the appearance of divine approbation, we are sufficiently forewarned in the Scriptures. *Jannes* and *Jambres* resisted *Moses* by false Miracles. In *Deut.* 13. 1. God speaks of the *Signs* and *Wonders* of false Prophets, who would by that means seek to seduce the People to follow after other Gods. Christ also in *Matth.* 24. 24. foretells that *false Christs and false Prophets shall arise, and shew great Signs and Wonders, insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very Elect*, and puts a special note of caution upon it, *Behold, I have told you before.* And to the same purpose is that of *Paul* concerning *Antichrist*, 2 *Thes.* 2. 9. where he tells us of powerful *Signs* and *Wonders* by the *working of Satan*; who doth all the while only lye and cheat, that he may draw Men to Errour.

If we make enquiry how Satan hath managed this Engine, we shall observe not only his diligence in using it, on *all occasions* to countenance all kind of Errours both in *Paganisme* and *Christianity*, but also his subtile *dexterity* by cheating Men with Forgeries and Falshood.

Heathenish Idolatry among other helps for its advancement, wanted not this, the *Oracles* and responses (which were common before the coming of Christ) were esteemed as miraculous confirmations of the truth of the Dieties which they worshipped; the *moveings* and *speakings* of their *Statua's* were arguments that the operative presence of some celestial *Numen* was affixed to such an Image. In some places the *solemn* Sacrifices are never performed without a *seeming Miracle.* As in *Nova Zembla* where the Priests *trances*, his running a *Sword* into his Belly, his making his Head and Shoulder *fall off* his body into a *Kettle* of hot Water by the drawing of a Line, and then his *reviving* again perfect and entire without maime or hurt, are all strange astonishing things to the beholders. But besides such things as these which are standing constant Wonders, we read of some that have had as it were a *Gift* of Miracles, that they might be eminently instrumental to promote and honour *Paganisme.* All Histories agree that *Simon Magus* did so many strange things at *Rome* (as the causing an Image to walk, turning Stones into Bread, transforming himself into

Johnsons relat. *in Hacluit. Tom.* I.

several

ſeveral Shapes, flying in the Air, &c.) that he was eſteemed a God. *Philoſtratus* and *Cedremus* report great things of *Apollonius*, as that he could deliver Cities from *Scorpions*, *Serpents*, *Earthquakes*, &c. and that many Miracles were wrought by him; this Man Satan *raiſed up* in an extraordinary manner to revive the *Honour* of *Paganiſme*, that it might at leaſt *vie* with *Chriſtianity*. And though few ever attained to that height which *Apollonius* and *Simon Magus* reached unto, yet have we ſeveral inſtances of great things done now and then, by ſome ſingular Perſons upon a *ſpecial* occaſion, which Satan improved to his advantage. *Veſpaſian* cured a Lame and Blind Man. *Adrianus* cured a blind Woman, and which is more, after he was dead by the *touch* of his Body, a Man of *Pannonia* who was *born Blind* received his Sight. *Valerius Maximus* tells of many ſtrange things, and particularly of a *Veſtal* Virgin that drew Water into a Sieve. As *Livy* tells of another (*Claudia* by name) who with her Girdle drew the Ship to the Shore which carryed the Mother of their Gods, when neither ſtrength of Men nor Oxen could do it.

Cornel. Tacit. Hiſtor. *lib.* 4.

Æ.ius ſpartianus in vit. *Adriani.*

De ſecundo bello Punico.

Errours under profeſſion of *Chriſtianity* have been ſupported and propagated by the boaſt of Miracles. A clear inſtance for this we have in *Popery*, that Religion being a perpetual *boaſt* of Wonders. To let paſs their great Miracle of *Tranſubſtantiation* (which as one hath lately demonſtrated, is a bundle of Miracles, or *contradictions* rather) becauſe it appears not to the *Senſes* of any Man, and conſequently is not *capable* of being an *Argument* to prove any of their opinions. We have abundance of ſtrange things related by them, as *proofs* of ſome *Doctrines* of theirs in particular, as Purgatory, Invocation of Saints, Tranſubſtantiation, &c. and of their profeſſion in the general, *Devils caſt out*, *Blind and Lame cured*, *Dead raiſed*, and what not; it would be endleſs to recite particulars; it would take a long time to tell what their *St. Francis* hath done, how he fetched Water out of a Rock, how he was homaged by Fowls and Fiſhes, how he made a Fountain in *Marchia* run Wine, and how far he *exceeded* Chriſt himſelf in wonderful feats; *Chriſt did nothing which St. Francis did not do, nay he did many more things than Chriſt did: Chriſt turned Water into Wine but once, but St. Francis did it thrice: Chriſt was once transfigured, but St. Francis twenty times:* he and his Brethren raiſed above a thouſand to Life, caſt out more than a thouſand Devils, &c. Their *Dominicus* raiſed three dead Men to Life. Their *Zeverius* while he was alive did many Miracles,

Mr. Baxter, *full and eaſy ſatisfaction.* cap. 4.

Nihil fecit Chriſtus quod Fanciſcus non feci, imò plura fecit quam Chriſtus. *Barthol.* de piſis lib. conformitat. *fol.* 1149.

cles, and after he was dead, his Body lay fifteen Months ſweetly ſmelling, without any taint of corruption. 'Tis irkſome to repeat their Stories; abundance of ſuch ſtuff might be added out of their own Writings: the deſign of all which is to prove, (to thoſe that are ſo Prodigal of their Faith as to believe them) that they *only* are the *true Church*, and that by this note (among others) they may be known to be ſo.

Vel figmenta hominum mendacium, vel portenta fallacium ſpirituum.

But let us turn aſide a little to obſerve Satans cunning in this pretence of Miracles; let things be ſoberly weighed, and we may ſee enough of the cheat. This great boaſt is (as *Auſtin* hath it) reſolved into one of theſe *two*, either the figments of *lying Men*, or the craft of *deceitful Spirits*.

As to the firſt of theſe, 'tis evident, that a great many things, that have been taken by the vulgar for mighty Wonders, were nothing but the *knaveries of Impoſtors*, who in this matter have uſed a *threefold* cunning.

First, By meer *jugling* and Forgery in *confederacies* and private contrivances they have ſet upon the Stage *Perſons* (*before inſtructed* to act their parts) or *things aforehand prepared*, to pretend to be what they were not, that others might ſeem to do what they did not, and all to amaze thoſe that know not the bottom of the matter. Of this nature was *Mahomets* Dove and Bull, who were *privately trained up* to that obedience, and familiarity which they uſed to him. The *Pagan* Prieſts were not altogether to ſeek in this peice of art. *Lucian* tells us of one *Alexander*, who nouriſhed and tamed a Serpent, and made the People of *Pontus* believe that it was the God *Æſculapius*; and doubtleſs the Idol Prieſts improved their private artificial contrivances. As of the *movings* of their Images (as that of *Venus* made by *Dædalus*, which by the means of *Quickſilver* incloſed, could ſtir it ſelf) their eating and drinking (as in the Story of *Bel* in the *Apochryphal* adjections to the Book of *Daniel*) their *reſponſes*, and ſeveral other *appearances* (as of the *Paper Head* of *Adonis* or *Oſiris*) which (as *Lucian* reports) comes ſwimming down the River every year from *Ægypt* to *Byblos*, &c. theſe and ſuch like they improved as evidences of the Power, Knowledg, and reality of their Gods. And though in the *prevalency* of Idolatry, where there was no conſiderable party to *oppoſe*, their cheats were not always diſcovered, yet we have no reaſon to imagine that the Prieſts of thoſe days were ſo *honeſt*, that they were *only* deceived by the Devils craft, and did not in a *villanous deſign* purpoſely

Ariſt. lib. 1. de anima.

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indeavour the delusion of others. If we had no other grounds for a just *suspition* in these cases, the famous instances of the abuse of *Paulina* at the Temple of *Isis* in *Rome*, in the Reign of the *Emperour Tyberius*, by the procurement of *Mondus*, who corrupted the Priest of *Anubis* to signify to her the love of their God, and under that coverture gratified the Lust of *Mondus*, mentioned by *Josephus*. And that of *Tyrannus* Priest of *Saturne* in *Alexandria*, who by the like pretence of the love of *Saturne*, adulterated most of the fairest Dames of the City, mentioned by *Ruffinus*. These would sufficiently witness that the Priests of those times were apt enough to abuse the people at the rate we have been speaking of. In *Popery* nothing hath been more ordinary; who knows not the Story of the *Holy Maid of Kent*, and the *Boy of Bilson*? How common is it with them to play tricks with Women troubled with *Hysterical* Distempers? and to pretend the casting out of Devils, when they have only to deal with a natural Disease? Not very many years since they practised upon a poor young Woman at *Durham*, and made great boasts of their *Exorcisms*, *Reliques*, and *Holy-water* against the Devil (with whom they would have all believe she was possessed) when the event discovered, that her Fits were only the Fits of the *Mother*. I my self (and some others in this place) have seen those Fits allayed by the Fume of Tobacco blown into her Mouth, to the shame and apparent detection of that Artifice. I might mention the *Legerdemain* of *Antonius* of *Padua*, who made his *Horse* adore the *Host*, for the conversion of an Heretick; the finding of the Images of *St. Paul* and *St. Dominick* in a Church at *Venice* with this Inscription for *Paul*, *By this Man you may come to Christ*; and this for *Dominick*, *But by this Man you may do it easilier*: and the Honour put upon *Garnet*, by his *Image* on *Straw*, *found* at his Execution, (in all probability) by him that *made it* and threw it down, or by his *Confederate*: but these are enough to shew the honesty of these kind of Men.

Antiquitat. Judaic. *lib.* 18. *cap.* 14.

Eccles. Hist. *lib.* 11. *c.* 25.

Secondly, They have also a cunning of ascribing *effects* to wrong *causes*, and by that means they make those things Wonders that are none. *Mahomet* called his Fits of *Falling-Sickness*, *Extasies* or Trances. *Austin* tells us the Heathens were notable at this: the burning Lamp in the Temple of *Venus*, though only the work of Art, was interpreted to be a constant Miracle of that Deity. The Image which (in another Temple) hung *in the Air*, by ignorant Gazers was accounted a Wonder, when indeed the *Loadstone*

De civitat. Dei, *lib.* 21. *c.* 6.

in the Roof and Pavement (though unseen) was the cause of it. The *Sydonians* were confirmed in their constant annual Lamentations of *Adonis*, by a *mock Miracle* of the redness of the River *Adonis*, at one time of the year constantly, they take it to be *Blood*, when it is nothing else but the *colouring* of the Water by the dust of *red Earth* or *Minium*, which the Winds constantly at that time of the year from Mount *Libanus* do drive into the Water. Neither are the *Papists* out in this point; I will only instance in that observation of *Dr. Jenison*, to confirm the Doctrine and Practice of *Invocation*: they take the advantage of Soveraign *Baths* and Waters, and where they espy any Fountain good against the Stone, or other Diseases, presently there is the *Statue* or Image of some Saint or other erected by it, by whose *Vertue* the Cure and Miracle must seem to be done; or some *Chappel* is erected to this or that *Saint*, to whom Prayers before, and thanks after washing, must be offered.

Purchas Pilg. Asia. *lib.* 1. *cap.* 17.

Heylin Cosmography. *pag.* 689.

Height of Israels Idolatry. c. 12.

Thirdly, Where the two former fail, Men that devote themselves to this kind of Service, imitate their Father the Devil, and fall to plain *lying*, and *devised Fables*. *Idolatry* was mainly underpropped by *fabulous* Stories; and no wonder, when they esteemed it a pious fraud, to nourish Piety towards the Gods, in which case (as *Polibius* saith) though their Writers speak *Monsters*, and write childish, absurd, and impossible things, yet are they to be pardoned *for their good intent*. Among the *Papists* what less can be expected, when the same principle is entertained among them? *Canus*, and *Ludovicus vives* mentioned by him, (as also some few others) do exceedingly blame that blind Piety of *coining Lyes* for Religion, and feigning Histories for the credit of their opinions; but while they with great freedom and ingenuity do *tax* the Fables of their own Party, they do plainly acknowledg that they are too much *guilty* of feigning, insomuch that not only the Author of the *Golden Legend* is branded with the Characters of a *Brazen Face*, and a *Leaden Heart*, but also *Gregories Dialogues*, and *Bedes* History are blamed by him, as containing Narrations of Miracles taken *upon trust* from the reports of the *vulgar*. And indeed the Wonders they talk of, are so *strange*, so *unlikely*, so *ridiculous*, and *absurd* some of them, that except a Man offer violence to his Reason, and wilfully shut his Eyes against the clear evidences of *Suspition*, he cannot think they are any thing else than Dreams and Fables, no better then *Æsops*; you may meet with several

Hist. *lib.* 16.

Loc. *l.* 11. c. 6.

Vid. Chamier paustra., *tom* 5. *lib.* 2. *cap.* 15.

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Catalogues of them in Protestant Writers. As their *St. Swithins* making whole a Basket of broken Eggs by the sign of the Cross. *Patricius* his making the stoln Sheep to bleet in the Thiefs Belly after he had eaten it. Their *St. Brigets* Bacon which in great Charity she gave to an hungry Dog, was found again in her Kettle; *Dionysius* after he was beheaded carryed his Head in his Hand three French Miles. *St. Dunstan* took the Devil by the Nose with his Tongues till he made him roar. *Dominicus* made him hold the Candle till he burnt his Fingers. *St. Lupus* imprisoned the Devil in a Pot all Night. A Chappel of the Virgin *Mary* was translated from *Palestine* to *Loretto*. A consecrated Host (being put into a *Hive of Bees* to cure them of the Murren) was so devoutly entertained, that the Bees built a *Chappel* in the Hive, with Doors, Windows, Steeple and Bells, erected an Altar, and laid the Host upon it, sung their canonical Houres, and kept their Watches by Night as Monkes used to do in their Cloisters, &c. Who would ever imagine that Men of any *seriousness* could satisfy themselves with such *childish Fopperies*? these are the usual ways by which Men of design have raised the *noise* of Miracles.

Prideaux orat. de impost. mendaciis. *Romes Tryumphs.* Mr. Baxters *safe Religion.* p. 168.

The other part of Satans cunning relates to himself and his *own actions:* when his Agents can go no further in the Trade of Miracle-making, he as a Spirit, doth often make use of his Power, Knowledg, and Agility, by which he can indeed do things incredible, and to be wondred at. 'Tis nothing for him by his knowledg of affairs at a distance, of the private endeavours, or expressed resolves of Princes, to *prognosticate* future events: by his power over the *bodies* of Men, he can with the help of *inclinations* and advantages do much to bring a Man into a *Trance*, or take the opportunity of a Fit of an *Apoplexy*, and then like a cunning Jugler, pretend (by I know not what, nor whom) to raise a Man from death. He knows the secret Powers and *Vertues* of things, and by *private applications* of them may easily supply Spirits, remove obstructions, and so cure Lameness, Blindness, and many other Distempers, and then give the honour of the Cure to what Person or Occasion may best fit his design; so that either by the *officious Lyes* of his Vassals, or the *exerting* of his own Power on suitable Objects at fit times, he hath made a great noise of Signs and Wonders in the World. And this stratagem of his, hath ever been at hand to gain a repute to false doctrine. And the rather doth he insist upon this,

Portenta fallacium spirituum.

First, Becauſe true Miracles are a *Divine Teſtimony* to Truth. As *Nichodemus* argued Joh. 3. 2. *No Man could do theſe Miracles that thou doeſt, except God be with him.* And there were *ſolemn* occaſions wherein they were *neceſſary*; as when God gave publick diſcoveries of his mind *before* the Scriptures were written; and alſo when he *altered* the Oeconomy of the *Old Teſtament*, and ſetled that of the *New.* In theſe caſes it was neceſſary that God ſhould confirm his Word by Miracles. But now, though theſe ends of Miracles are ceaſed, though God hath ſo ſetled and *fixed* the rule of our Obedience and Worſhip, that no *other Goſpel* or Rule is to be expected, and conſequently no *need* of new Miracles, where the *certain* account of the *Old* Miracles are ſufficient *atteſtations* of old and unalterable Truths; nay though God have expreſly told us, *Deut.* 13. 1. that no Miracle (though it ſhould *come to paſs*, and could not be diſcovered to be a Lye) ſhould prevail with us to forſake the eſtabliſhed truths and ways of Scripture, or to entertain any thing contrary to it; yet doth Satan exerciſe herein a *proud imitation* of the Supream Majeſty, and withal doth ſo *dazle* the minds of the weaker ſort of Men, (who are more apt to conſider the Wonder, than to ſuſpect the Deſign) that (without due heed given to the cautions which God hath laid before us in that particular) they are ready to interpret them to be Gods witneſs to this or that Doctrine to which they ſeem to be appendant.

Secondly, Becauſe Satan hath a more than ordinary advantage to *feign* Miracles he doth more induſtriouſly ſet himſelf to pretend them, and to urge them, for the accompliſhment of his ends. 'Tis an eaſy work to prevail with Men that are wholly devoted to their own Intereſt under the Mask of Religion, to ſay and do any thing that may further their deſign; and the buſineſs of Miracles is ſo imitable *by Art*, through the *ignorance* and *heedleſneſs* of Men, that with a ſmall labour Satan can do it at pleaſure. The ſecret Powers of Nature (ſuch as that of the *Loadſtone*) by a dexterous application brought into act, in a fitly contrived Subject, will ſeem Miraculous to thoſe that ſee not the *ſecret ſprings* of thoſe actions. There have been *artificial* contrivances of Motions, which had they been diſguiſed under a *religious form*, and directed to ſuch an end, might have paſſed for greater Miracles than many which we have mentioned. Such was the *Dove* of *Archita*s which did fly in the Air, as if it had been a living Creature. Such was the *Flie* of *Regiomontanus*, and the *Eagle* preſented to the Empe-

Heylin Coſmography. *pag.* 399.

Emperour *Maximilan*, which in the compaſs of their little Bodies, contained ſo many Springs and Wheels as were ſufficient to give them Motion, and to direct their courſes as if they had been animated. *Albertus Magnus* his Artificial Man, and the Silver *Gally*, and *Tritons* made by a Goldſmith at *Paris*, were rare peices of Art, their Motions ſo certain and ſteady, that they ſeemed to have Life and Underſtanding. If Art can do all this, how much more may we ſuppoſe can Satan do? how eaſily can he make Apparitions, preſent ſtrange Sights to the Eye, and Voices to the Ear? and by putting out his Power do a thouſand things aſtoniſhing and wonderful?

Eightly, Sometime Satan pleads for Errour, from the *eaſe*, *peace*, or other *advantages* which Men pretend they have received, ſince they engaged in ſuch a way, or received ſuch a perſwaſion. This is an Argument from the *effect*, and frequently uſed to confirm the Minds of Men in their Opinions. Hence they ſatisfy themſelves with theſe reaſonings: *I was before always under fears and uncertainties, I never was at peace or reſt in my Mind, I tryed ſeveral courſes, followed ſeveral Parties, but I never had ſatisfaction or comfort till now, and by this I know that I am in a right way.* Others argue after the ſame manner from their abundance and outward proſperity: *I met with nothing but croſſes and loſſes before, but now God hath bleſſed me with an increaſe of Subſtance, proſpered my Trade and Undertakings*, &c. Theſe, though apparently weak and deceitful Grounds, are reputed ſtrong and concluſive, to thoſe that are *firſt reſolved* upon an Errour. For Men are ſo willing to *juſtify* themſelves in what they have undertaken, that they greedily *catch* at any thing that hath the leaſt appearance of probability to anſwer their ends.

This plea of ſatisfaction is commonly from one of theſe two things.

Firſt, From *inward Peace*, and contentment of Mind. Satan knows that Peace is the thing to which a Man ſacrificeth all his labours and travel; this he ſeeks, (though often in a wrong way, and by wrong means:) he knows alſo that true Peace is only the Daughter of Truth, (*the ways* whereof *are pleaſantneſs*, and the *Paths* whereof *are Peace*;) neither is he ignorant of the delights which a Man hath, by enjoying himſelf in the ſweet repoſe of a contented Mind, that he may charm the Hearts of the erroneous into a confidence and aſſurance that they have taken a right courſe,

he

he doth all he can to further a false peace in them, and to this purpose he commonly useth this method:

First, He doth all he can to *unsettle* them from the Foundation of Truth upon which they were bottomed; he labours to render things *suspitious*, doubtful or uncertain: this some have noted from *2 Thes. chap. 2. ver. 2.* where Satans first attempts are to *shake* their *Minds*, not only by disquiet, (of which we are next to speak) but by *alteration* of their judgment, (for *Mind* is sometimes taken for *Sentence*, *Opinion*, *Judgment*, as 1 *Cor. 2. 16. we have the Mind of Christ*, and 1 Cor. 1. 10. *in the same Mind, and in the same Judgment*.

Sclater in loc. νοῦς for γνώμη.

Secondly, His second approach is to raise a storm of restless *disquiet* upon that uncertainty; and in order to his intended design he usually fills them with the utmost *anxiety* of Mind, and makes their Thoughts (like a tempestuous Sea) dash one against another. This peice of his Art is noted in the forecited place, *that ye be not shaken in mind or troubled*; the word signifies a *great perplexity*. And this is an usual method which the false Teachers among the *Galatians* practised, they first troubled them, and then endeavoured by the advantage of that trouble to pervert the Gospel of Christ. To effect both these, he doth amuse them with all the objections that can be raised. If he can say any thing of the Antiquity of the Errour, the Number, Wisdom, Learning or Authority of those that embrace it, they are sure to hear of these things to the full; the danger of continuing as they were, and the happiness of the new Doctrine, are represented with all aggravating circumstances; and these so often, that their thoughts have no rest: and if this restlesness does wound or weaken them, he pursues with an high hand. These ways of disturbing the unsettled mind, are hinted to us in the aforesaid place, *Spirit*, *Word*, *Letter*, any thing that carries a seeming Authority to unsettle, or power to amaze and distress. And we may here further note, that where the minds of Men are discomposed with *other* fears or disquiets, Satan is ready to improve them to this use, so that commonly when the Word of God begins to work at first upon the consciences of Men, to awaken them to the consideration of their Sin and Danger, the Adversary is then very busy with them to inveagle them into some Errour or other.

θροεῖσθαι.

Gal. 1. 7. & 5. 12.

Thirdly, Having throughly prepared the mind with restless fears, he then advanceth forward with the *proffers of peace and comfort* in

the way of Errour which he proposeth; and in this case Errour will boast much, *Come to me, and ye shall find rest for your souls.* How grateful and welcome the confident proffers of ease and satisfaction are to a tossed and disquieted mind any Man will easily imagine? 'Tis usually thus, Men that are tired out, will easily embrace any thing for ease. A Man in this case may be wrought upon like Wax to receive any Impression; he will fasten on any thing true or false that doth but promise comfort.

Fourthly, The compleatment of his method is to please the Man in the *fruition* of the peace promised: and this he labours to do, not only to *fix* the Man in his delusion, but to make that Man *brag* of ease to be a snare to others. And 'tis easy for the Devil to do this: for, First, The *novelty* of a new Opinion doth naturally please, especially if it give any seeming commendation for discovery or singularity. We see Men are fond of their own Inventions, and delighted to be lifted up above others. Secondly, Satan can easily *allay* the storm which he himself *raised*: he gives over to molest with anxious thoughts, on the contrary he suggests thoughts of satisfaction. Thirdly, And whatever he can do in a *natural way* to raise up our passions of joy and delight, he will be sure to do it now, to *ravishment* and excess if he can; and then he not only makes these Men sure, (for what argument can stand before such a confidence?) but hath an active instrument for the allurement of such as cannot discover these methods.

Secondly, *Outward prosperity* is the other common plea for Errour. Though successes, plenty and abundance of worldly comforts, argue of themselves neither love nor hatred, truth nor falshood, because the wise Providence of God, for holy ends and reasons (often undiscerned by us) permits often the *Tabernacles of Robbers to prosper*, and permits those *that deal treacherously* with the Truths of God, *to be planted, to take root, to grow, yea, to bring forth Fruit*; nevertheless if in a way of Errour they meet with outward Blessings, they are apt to ascribe all to their Errours, and to say as *Israel*, Hos. 2. 5. *I will go after my Lovers that gave me my Bread and my Water, my Wool and my Flax, mine Oyl and my Drink*, without any serious consideration of God's common Bounty, which upon far other accounts, *gives them Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and multiplies their Silver and Gold, which they prepared for* Baal, *ver.* 8. I shall not need to add any thing further for the proof and explanation of this, than what we have in *Jer.* 44. 17. where the Jews

Jews expresly advance their Idolatrous Worship as the right way, and confirm themselves even to *obstinacy* in the pursuit of it, upon this reason; *We will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own Mouth, to burn Incense to the Queen of Heaven —— for then had we plenty of Victuals, and were well, and saw no evil: but since we left off to burn Incense to the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out our drink-offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the Sword, and by the Famine.*

Ninthly, Instead of better arguments, Satan usually makes *Lyes his refuge:* and these respect either the *Truth* which he would cry down, or the *Errour* which he would set up.

Those Lyes that are managed against Truth, are of two sorts; mistakes and misrepresentations of its *Doctrines*, or *Calumnies* against the *Persons* and *Actions* of those that take part with it.

Those Lyes that are proper to bespatter a *Truth* withal, are such as tend to render it *unlovely, inconvenient*, or *dangerous.* Satan hath never been awanting to raise up mists and fogs to eclipse the shining beauty of Truth. Sometime he perswades Men that it is a *novelty*, and contrary *to the tradition of the Fathers:* and then if an Errour had been once upon the stage before, and had again been hissed out of the World, when it peeps out again into the World, its former impudency is made an argument for its antiquity, and Truth is decryed as novel. Or, if it be but an Errour of yesterday, and hath only obtained an Age or two, then the *Ghosts* of our forefathers are conjured up as witnesses, and the plea runs currant, *What is become of your Fathers? or, are you wiser than your Fathers? are they all Damned?* These were insisted on by the *Heathens:* the Gods of the *Country*, and the Worship of their *Fathers*, they thought should not be forsaken for Christianity, which they judged was but a *novelty* in comparison of *Paganisme.* Of the same extract is that *old song* of the Papists, *Where was your Religion before Luther?* And to this purpose they talk of the succession of their *Bishops* and *Popes.* And other Errours grow a little *pert* and confident, if they can but find a *pattern* or sample for themselves among the *old Heresies.* Sometime he endeavours to bring Truth into suspition, by rendering it a dangerous *encroachment* upon the *rights* and priviledges of Men, as if it would turn all upside down, and introduce Factions and Confusions. This clamour was raised against the Gospel, that it would *subvert* the Doctrine of *Moses and the*

the Law. Sometimes he cloaths the opinions of Truth with an *ugly dreſs*, and miſrepreſents it to the World, as guilty of ſtrange inferences and *abſurdities*, which only ariſe from a *wrong ſtating* of the queſtions: and where it doth *really* differ from Errour, he endeavours to *widen* the differences to an inconvenient diſtance, ſo that if it go *a Mile* from Errour, Satan will have it to *go two*; if Truth teach *Juſtification by Faith*, Errour repreſents it as *denying* all care of *Holineſs* and *good Works*; if Truth ſay, *bare moral Vertues* are not ſufficient *without Grace*, Errour preſently accuſeth it, as denying any *neceſſary uſe of Morality*, or affirming that *moral* Vertues are *obſtructions* and hindrances to Salvation. It were eaſie to note abundance of ſuch Inſtances.

As for calumnies againſt the *Perſons* and Actions of thoſe that are Aſſertors of Truth, 'tis well known for an old thread-bare deſign, by which Satan hath gained not a little. *Machiavil* borrowed the policy from him, and formed it into a Maxime, for he found by experience that where ſtrong Slanders had ſet in their Teeth, though never ſo unjuſtly, the Wounds were never *throughly healed*: for ſome that heard the report of the *Slander*, never heard the *Vindication*, and thoſe that did, were not always ſo *unprejudiced* as to free themſelves from *all ſuſpition*, but ſtill ſomething remained uſually upon their Spirits for ever after; and that, like a ſecret venome, poyſons all that could be ſaid or done by the Perſons, that (wrongfully) fell under their prejudice, and did not a little derogate from the authority and power of the Truths which they delivered.

The Friends of Truth have always to their coſt found it ſo. Chriſt himſelf eſcaped not the lyes and cenſures of Men when he did the greateſt Miracles; they raiſed this calumny againſt him, *That he caſt out Devils by* Beelzebub *the Prince of Devils*: when he Joh. 8. 48.
ſhewed the moſt compaſſionate condeſcentions, they called him *a Man gluttonous*, *a Wine-bibber*, *a friend of Publicans and Sinners*; and at laſt upon a miſinterpretation of his ſpeeches, (*I will deſtroy this Temple, and in three days I will build it up*, Mat. 26. 61.) they arraigned and condemned him for *Blaſphemy*: and his Servants have (according to what he foretold) drunk of the ſame Cup; the more eminent in ſervice, the greater draught. *Paul*, a choſen veſſel, met with much of this unjuſt dealing; he was accuſed *Act*. 21. 28. as ſpeaking againſt the *People*, the *Law*, and the *Temple*; and, *Chap*. 24. 5. called *a peſtilent Fellow*, *a mover of Sedi-*

tion, a prophaner of the Temple. Neither can we wonder at this, that the greatest Innocency, or highest degree of Holiness, is no Armour of proof against the sharp Arrows of a lying Tongue: When we read this as one of Satan's great Characters, that he is *the Accuser of the Brethren*, and that his Agents are so perfectly instructed in this Art, that they are also branded with the same mark of *false Accusers*, Jude 10. 'Tis well known how the Primitive Christians were used, they were accounted *the filth and off-scouring of all things*; there could be nothing that could render them odious or ridiculous but they were aspersed with it, as that they *sacrificed Infants*, *worshipped the Sun*, and *used promiscuous Uncleanness*; nay, what ever *Plague* or disaster befel their Neighbours, they were sure to carry the *blame*. And we might trace this Stratagem down to our own days. *Luther* in his time was the common Butt for all the poysoned Arrows of the Papists calumny; which so exceeded all bounds of Sobriety and Prudence, that they devised a *Romance* of his Death, how he was choaked of the Devil; that before he died, he desired his Corps might be carried into the Church, and adored with divine Worship; and that after his Death the excessive stench of his Carcase forced all his Friends to forsake him. All this and more to this purpose they published *while he was alive*, whose Slanders (worthy only of laughter) he refuted by his own Pen. The like fury they expressed against *Calvin*, by their *Bolsecus*, whom they set on work to fill a Book with impudent lyes against him: Neither did *Beza*, *Junius*, or any other of note escape without some slander or other. How unjustly the *Arrians* of old accused *Athanasius* of Uncleanness, and of bereaving *Arsenius* of his Arm, is sufficiently known in History.

Theod. Hist. lib. cap. 30.

But the Devils malice doth not always run in the dirty channel of odious Calumnies, he hath sometimes a more *cleanly conveyance* for his Lyes against holy Men. In prosecution of the same design, 'tis a fair colour for Errour, if he can abuse the name and credit of renowned Champions of Truth, by *fathering* an Errour upon them which they never owned. By this means he doth not only *grace* a false Doctrine with the *authority* of an eminent Person, whose estimation might be a snare to some well-meaning Persons, but weakens the Truth, by bringing a faithful Assertor of it into suspition of holding (at least in some points) dangerous Opinions; by which many are affrighted from entertaining any thing

that they write or preach: For, though they may be confeſſedly ſound in the moſt weighty Doctrines, yet if it be once buzz'd abroad that they are in any thing unſound, this dead Fly ſpoils all the precious Ointment: and the matter were yet the leſs, if there were any juſt cauſe for ſuch a prejudice; but ſuch is Satans Art, that if a Man explains the ſame Truth but in *different words* and forms of ſpeech, than thoſe that others have been uſed unto; or if he caſts it into a *more convenient Mould*, that (by laying aſide doubtful or flexible expreſſions) it may be more ſafely guarded from the exceptions of the Adverſaries, eſpecially if he carefully chuſe his path betwixt the *extreams* on either hand; this is enough for Satan to catch at, and preſently he beſtows upon him the names of the *very Errours* which he moſt ſtrenuouſly *oppoſeth*; nay, ſometimes if he mention any thing above the *reach* or acquaintance of thoſe that hear him, 'tis well if he eſcapes the charge of Hereſie, and that he meets not with the lot of *Virgilius* Biſhop of *Saltzbury*, who was judged no leſs than heretical, for venting his opinion concerning the *Antipodes*. I know Men do ſuch things in their zeal, but while they do ſo, they are concerned to conſider how Satan doth abuſe their good meaning to the diſſervice of Truth.

Vid. *Harvæi Præfat.* in Sang. Circulo. & *Heylin Coſmogr.* p. 399.

As Satan's deſign in beſpattering the Actions and Doctrines of good Men, is to bring the Truth they profeſs into a ſuſpition of falſhood, and to advance the contrary Errours to the place and credit of Truth; ſo doth he uſe a *skill* proportionable to his deſign. And though he be ſo *impudent* that he will not bluſh at the contrivance of the moſt groſs and malicious lye, yet withall he is ſo *cunning*, that he ſtudiouſly endeavours ſome probable riſe for his ſlanders, and commonly he takes this courſe:

Firſt, He doth all he can to *corrupt* the Profeſſors of Truth; if Riches or Honours will tempt them to be Proud, High-minded, Contentions, or Extravagant, he plyes them with theſe Weapons; if the pleaſures of the Fleſh and World be more likely to beſot them, or to make them ſenſual, earthly or looſe, he inceſſantly lays thoſe Baits before them; if Fears and Perſecutions can affright them out of duty; if Injuries and Provocations may prejudice them into a froward or wayward temper, he will certainly urge them by ſuch occaſions, and when he hath prevailed in any meaſure, he is ſure to aggravate every circumſtance to its utmoſt height, and upon that advantage to make additions of a great many things beyond what they can be juſtly accuſed of. This old

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device *Paul*, in *Rom.* 2.24. takes notice of concerning the *Jews*, whose breach of the Law so dishonoured God, that *the Name of God was blasphemed among the* Gentiles *through them.* The *Jews* lived wickedly, and their wicked lives was a currant argument among the *Gentiles* to confirm them in *Paganism*; for they judged the Law of God could not approve it self to be better than their own, when the Professors of it were so naught. To prevent this mischief, we are seriously warned to be carefully strict in all our stations, *that the Name of God and his Doctrine be not blasphemed.* 1 Tim. 6. 1. Tit. 2. 5.

Secondly, Whatever miscarriages *any Professor* of Truth is guilty of, Satan takes care that it be presently charged upon *all the Profession*. If any *one* offend, it is matter of *publick* blame; much more if any *Company* or Party shall run into extravagancies, or do actions strange and unjustifyable, those that agree with them in the *general name* of their Profession (though they differ as far from their wild Opinions and Practices as their enemies do) shall still be upbraided with *their* Follies. We see this practised daily by differing Parties, according to what was foretold, in 2 *Pet.* 2. 2. *False Prophets* seduce a great number of Christians to follow *their pernicious ways*, and by reason of their wild ungodly behaviour, *the whole way of Truth was evil spoken of.*

Thirdly, The least slip or *infirmity* of the Children of Truth the Devil is ready to bring upon the Stage; and they that will not charge *themselves* as offenders for very *great* evils, will yet object to the disparagement of Truth the smallest mistakes of *others*; a *mote* in the eye of the lovers of Truth shall be espyed, when a *beam* in the eye of falshood shall pass for nothing.

Fourthly, Slanderous Aspersions are sometimes raised from a simple *mistake* of Actions, and their *grounds* or *manner* of performance, and sometimes from a malicious *Misrepresentation*. The Devil seldom acts from a simple mistake, but he will either suborn the passionate Opposers to a *wilful perverting* of the true management of things, or will by a *false account* of things take the advantage of their prejudice, to make Men believe that such things have been said or done, which indeed never were. The Christians in the Primitive times were reported to be bloody Men, and that they did kill Men in Sacrifice, and did eat their Flesh and drink their Blood; and this was only occasioned by their *Doctrine* and *use* of the *Sacrament* of the Body and Blood of Christ. They were accused for *promiscuous uncleanness* with one another,

and this only because they taught that there was no distinction of *Male and Female* in respect of *Justication*, and that they were all *Brethren* and *Sisters* in Christ. This account *Tertullian* gives of the Calumnies of those times, and others have noted the like occasions of other abuses of them. They were reported to worship the Sun, because they in times of persecution were forced to meet *early* in the Fields, and were often seen undispersed at Sun-rising. They were reported to worship *Bacchus* and *Ceres*, because of the Elements of *Bread* and *Wine* in the Lords Supper. If they met in *private places*, and in the *night*, it was enough to occasion surmises of *Conspiracy* and Rebellion: so ready is Satan to take occasion where none is given.

Apolog. cap. 7, 8, 9, 39.

Fifthly, But if none of these are at hand, then a *downright Lye* must do the turn, according to that of *Jer.* 18. 18. *Come and let us devise devices against* Jeremiah: and when once the lye is coyned, Satan hath officious Instruments to spread it; *Jer.* 20. 10. *Report, say they, and we will report it.*

These were the Lyes raised against Truth; but besides this endeavour, he useth the same Art of *lying* to inhance the *credit of Errour. Lying Inspirations*, *Lying Signs* and Wonders we have spoken of, I shall only mention another sort of Lying, which is that of *Forgery*, an Art which Errour hath commonly made use of. Sometimes *Books* and Writings erroneous have been made to carry the *names* of Men that *never knew* or saw them. The Apostles themselves escaped not these abuses; you read of the counterfeit *Gospels* of *Thomas* and *Bartholomew*, the Acts of *Peter* and *Andrew*, the *Apostolical* Constitutions, and a great many more. Later Writers have by the like hard usage been forced to father the Brats of other Mens Brians. I might be large in these, but they that please may see more of this in Authors, that have of purpose discovered the frauds of *spurious*, *supposititious* Books; the design is obvious; Errour would by this means adorn it self with the excellent names of Men of renown, that so it might pass for good Doctrine with the unwary.

Coci censura Patrum. Dr. *James* de corrupt. Scrip. concilior. *Prideaux* de Pseudo-Epigraphis.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of Satan's second way of improving his Advantages, which is by working upon the Understanding indirectly by the Affections. This he doth (1.) By a silent insensible introduction of Errour. His method herein. (2.) By entangling the Affections with the external garb of Errour, a gorgeous dress, or affected plainness. (3.) By fabulous imitations of Truth. The design thereof. (4.) By accommodating Truth to a complyance with Parties that differ from it. Various instances hereof. (5.) By driving to a contrary extream. (6.) By bribing the Affections with Rewards, or forcing them by Fears. (7.) By engaging Pride and Anger. (8.) By adorning Errour with the Ornaments of Truth.

THE usual *Arguments* by which Satan doth *directly* blind the Understanding to a perswasion to accept Darkness for Light, we have now considered. It remains that some account be given of the *second* way of prevailing upon the Understanding, and that is by *swaying* it through the power and prevalency of the *Affections*. In order to this he hath many Devices, the principal whereof are these:

First, By silent and *insensible* procedure he labours to introduce Errours; and lest Men should *startle* at a sudden and full presentment of the whole, he thinks it policy to insinuate into the Affections, by offering it in *parcels*. Thus he prevents wonderment and surprisal, (lest Men should boggle and turn away,) and doth by degrees *familiarize* them to that, which at first would have been rejected with abhorrency. We read in the Parable of the Tares, that the envious Man which sowed them (who was Satan) took his opportunity *while Men slept*, and then went away in the dark; insomuch that the discovery was not made *at the sowing*, but

but *at their coming* up. In purſuance of this policy, we find the principal Inſtruments of Satan have followed the footſteps of their Maſter; they *creep in unawares*, Jude 4. they *privily bring in damnable Hereſies*, 2 Pet. 2. 1. and as if they were guilty of ſome modeſt ſhamefaſtneſs, they *creep into houſes*, 2 Tim. 3. 6. The ſteps by which the Devil creeps into the boſoms of Men to plant Errour in the Heart, are theſe:

Firſt, He endeavours to gain the Heart by the *ingenious* ſweet and delightful *ſociety* of thoſe that are corrupted already. Errour hath a peculiar Art to *woo the good-will* before it diſcloſe it ſelf; it firſt *ſteals* the Ear and Affections to the *Perſon*, and thence inſenſibly derives it to the *Opinion*. Truth is Maſculine, and perſwades *by teaching*, but Errour doth often *teach by perſwading*. 'Tis very difficult to affect the Perſon, and not to beſtow upon the Errour better thoughts than it deſerves. Thoſe therefore that are cunning in the Art of Seduction, make extraordinary pretences of *affectionate kindneſs*, and (as the Apoſtle noted concerning the Seducers of his time, *Gal*. 4. 17.) *they zealouſly affect* (thoſe whom they would delude) *but not well:* Their Art doth alſo teach them not to be *over-haſty* in *propounding* their Opinions, nor ſo much as to touch upon them till they perceive they have gained a firm perſwaſion of their aimity, and of the reality of thoſe kindneſſes which they have made ſhew of: but when they have once gained this point of advantage, they take opportunity more freely to propound and preſs their Doctrines. Thus are Men at laſt beguiled *with enticing words*.

'Tis alſo part of the ſame Deſign, that Satan ſometimes makes uſe of *Women Seducers*: For, (1.) They are more apt to be deluded themſelves; *ſilly Women* are ſoon *led captive*. (2.) Being deceived, they are moſt earneſtly forward in the heat of zeal to propagate their Opinions. (3.) And by the advantage of their Nature they are moſt engaging, their affectionate Perſwaſions uſually have a *peculiar prevalency*. The *daughters of* Moab (through *Balaam*'s counſel) were made choice of, as the fitteſt Inſtruments to ſeduce *Iſrael* to Idolatry. *Solomon*, though a wiſe Man, was prevailed with by the importunity of his Wives, againſt his former practice and knowledg, to favour falſe Worſhip. The Woman *Jezabel*, Rev. 2. 20. was Satan's under-Agent, *to teach and ſeduce* God's Servants *to commit Fornication, and to eat things ſacrificed to Idols*. (4.) Beſides, they have a greater influence

ence upon their Children, to leaven them with their own Opinions.

Secondly, Satan also observes a *gradual motion* in fixing any particular Errour. If he attempt it *immediately* without an external Agent, he first puts Men upon the *reading* or consideration of some *dark Passages* that seem to look favourably upon his design; then he *starts the Notion* or Objection; then begets a *scruple* or questioning: Having once proceeded thus far, he follows his Design with *probable Reasons*, till he have formed it into an *Opinion*: When 'tis come to this, a little more begets a *perswasion*, that perswasion he ripens into a *resoluteness* and obstinacy, and then at last fires it with *zeal* for the deluding of others. Having thus laid the foundation by *one* Errour, he next endeavours to *multiply* it, and then brings in the *Inferences* that unavoidably follow: for as one Wedg makes way for another, so from one Falshood, another will easily force it self, and from two or three, who knows how many? And though the consequences are usually *more absurd* than the principles, yet are they with a small labour brought into favour, where the principles are first *confidently* believed; so that those Errours, which because of their ugly look, Satan durst not at first propound, lest he should scare Men off from their reception, he can now with an undaunted boldness recommend. It cannot be imagined that ever Men would *at first* have entertained Opinions of *contempt of Ordinances* and *Libertinism*, and therefore we may observe they usually come in the *rear* of *other* Opinions, which by a long tract of Art prepare their way.

Yet may we note, that though Satan usually is forced to *wait the leasure* of some Mens timerousness and bashfulness, and therefore cannot ripen Errour to an hasty birth as he desires, (hence is it, that one Man often doth no more for his time, but only *brew* it, or it may be makes only the *rude draught* of it, and another *vents* and adorns it: for so it was betwixt *Lælius* and *Faustus Socinus*, betwixt *David George* and his Successors:) And though he be so confined to the *first principles* of Errour, which he hath instilled, that he cannot at present enlarge them beyond their own just consequences; yet there are some *choice* principles of his, which if he can but fasten upon the Mind, they presently *open the gap* to all kind of Errours imaginable; they are like the firing a Train of Gunpowder, which in a Moment blows up the whole Fabrick of Truth: such are the delusions of *Enthusiasm*, *Inspirati-*

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ons and *Prophetick Raptures*; let these be once fixed, and then there is nothing so Inhumane, Irreligious, Mad, or Ridiculous, but Satan can with ease perswade Men to it, and also under the highest pretences of *Religion* and *Certainty*; the experience of all Ages, hath made any further proof of this altogether needless.

This is his way when he *acts alone*. But if he use *Instruments*, though he is also gradual in his procedure, yet 'tis in a *different method*: for there he sometimes proceeds from the abuse of something *innocent* and lawful (by the help of a *long tract of time*) to introduce the *grossest Falshood*. Thus may we conceive he brought *Idolatry* to its height: first Men *admired* the wisdom or famous acts of their Progenitors, or Benefactors; next, they *erected Pillars*, or Images of such Persons, to perpetuate the Names, Honour and Memory of them and their Actions. Another Age being at a *greater distance* from the things done, and consequently greater Strangers to the *true ends* and reasons of such practices, which being (as it usually falls out in such cases) abused by false reports or misrepresentations of things, (for Time covers things of this nature with so thick a Mist, that 'tis difficult to discover the true *Metal* of an *original Constitution*) they in a devout ignorance gave the Images a *greater respect* than was at first intended; then did they slide into a conceit they were not of the *ordinary rank* of Mortals, or at least they were *exalted* to a condition which ordinary Mortals were not capable of; thus they supposed them *Deities*, and gave them *worship* of Prayers and Sacrifices: hence they went further, and *multiplied Gods*, and that of several sorts, according to the natures of things that were good or hurtful to them; and then at last consulting *how mean* their offerings were, and how unlikely to please their *Godships*, they concluded *Humane sacrifices* most sutable, especially to expiate greater provocations, and in times of great calamity.

The burthensom heap of ceremonious Superstitions in *Popery* was the work of *several Ages*, they were not brought in all at once. One in a devotional heat fancied such a Ceremony as a fit testimony of Zeal, or a proper incitement of his Affections; Another deviseth a second, and so all along; as the minds of Men were *best pleased* with their *own inventions*, and had so much *credit* or authority to recommend them to others, they encreased the sum by *new additions*, till at last they are become a burthen not to be born; and still as they receded from the *primitive purity*,

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and became more careless and corrupt in their lives, (for from *good Bishops* they declined to but *tollerable Arch-Bishops*, till at last they are become *incurable Babylonians*,) so they departed gradually from the simplicity of the Gospel, and *abounded* in contrivances of Ceremonies.

Matth. Prideaux Introduct. o History.

Thirdly, In corrupting *established Truths*. Satan's proceedings are not by *sudden* and observable leaps, but by lingring and *slow* motions; as Flowers and Plants grow insensibly, and as Men gradually wax old and feeble. Violent and *hasty* alterations he knows would beget *Observation*, Dislike, and Opposition; neither will he make *such attempts*, but where he is sure of a *strong prevalent* Party, which by force and power is able to carry all before it: In this case he is willing to enforce Errour *by Fire and Sword*. Thus he propagated *Mahumetism* at first, and still continueth to do so by the conquering Arms of the *Turks*; but where he hath not this advantage, he betakes himself to another course, and studieth to do his work so that he may not be observed. The *possibility* of such a change, with the *manner* of effecting it, we may observe in many Churches, that have declined from the Doctrine which they *at first* received, but most of all in the Church at *Rome*, which at first was a *pure Church*, as the Apostle testifieth, but now so changed from the Truths upon which they were bottomed in their *first Constitution*, as if she had not been the same Church. They boast indeed that as they were at first, so they are now; but nothing is more evident than the contrary: and the possibility of their *insensible* corruption is as demonstrable as the *alteration* of Doctrine in *any other* Church. The manifold ways that Satan takes in this matter in the *abuse* of Scripture, by raising *perverse* Interpretations, and *unnatural* Inferences, and the *advantages* of a *long succession* in Authority; of the *negligence* and *ignorance* of the common People; of the *crafty subtilty* of the Teachers, especially when Religion began to be abused to *secular* Interest, is described by *Acontius* and others. If we should *single* out any of their noted Errours, and follow up the History of it to its *first original*, we shall find, that whatever strong *current* it hath now gotten, it was very small and inconsiderable in the *Fountain*. The *Invocation* of Saints, though it be now an established Article among them, yet its *first rise* was from the *unwary Prosopopœa's* of the Ancients, and the liberty of their *Oratorical declamatory stile*; these gave occasion to some *private Opinions*, these Opinions

Stratagem Satanæ. lib. 4.

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to ſome *private* devotional *liberty* in Practice, and from *private Opinions* and Practices, at laſt it obtained ſo ſtrong a Party, that it procured a *publick Injunction*. The like method was uſed for the Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*, whoſe beginning was from the abuſe of ſuch *Sentences* as this in ancient Writers, *That after Conſecration it was no more Bread and Wine, but the Body and Blood of Chriſt*; by which expreſſion the Authors intended no more than this, that the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament were *relatively altered*, and were more than *ordinary Bread and Wine*, becauſe they were *repreſentatives* of the Body and Blood of Chriſt: however, this gave them courage to interpret *literally* and ſtrictly theſe words of Chriſt, *This is my Body:* and thus by degrees from the *Opinion* of a *few* it became the *judgment of many*, and from the toleration of a *private Opinion* of ſome Doctors and *unimpoſed*, it obtained at laſt a *Canon* to make it Authentick, *Publick Doctrine*.

Fourthly, This inſenſible proceeding is in nothing more evident than in the power of *Cuſtom* and *Education*; Cuſtom doth by degrees take off the *ſtartling* of Conſcience: and thoſe Opinions or Practices which at firſt look affright it, are by a little familiarity made more ſmooth and tollerable. The diſſents of Men by frequent ſeeing and hearing, become *tame* and gentle; but the force of Education is incomparably great, for this makes an Errour to become as it were *natural*; they ſuck it in with their Milk, and draw it in with their Air. This general advantage the Devil hath over all the *Children* of erroneous Parents, eſpecially where *Countreys* or Nations are of the ſame Perſwaſion; inſomuch that *Turks* have as great belief of their *Alcoran* as we of the *Bible*, and think as reverently of *Mahomet* as Chriſtians do of *Chriſt*. The Children of Idolatrous *Pagans* have as great a confidence of the truth of their way of *Heatheniſh Worſhip*, as we have of *God's Ordinances* and Inſtitutions.

Fifthly, We may ſee ſomething of this Stratagem of ſilent intanglement in Satan's *Surpriſals*; for ſometimes he inveagles Men at *unawares*, and engageth them in Errour while they know not what they are doing. Weak heads cannot ſee the far end of a ſmooth-fac'd Doctrine; and they uſually embrace it by *whole-ſale*, for *ſome particular* that ſtrikes upon their fancy, or gratifies their humour. If they read a Book that hath ſome good things in it, or is affectionate, for the ſake of *theſe* they *ſwallow* all the reſt (though never ſo dangerous Doctrine) whithout further exami-

nation. The like advantage he hath from Actions that are bad or tollerable, according to the various respects which they have to the ends or consequences that ly before them, for he frequently doth interest Men in an erroneous consequence, by *concerning* them in actions that lead that way; and having thus beguiled them into an evil mistake, instead of drawing their Foot out of the Snare, he pusheth them forward to maintain their ground, and to justify their proceedings. This was the case of some of the *Corinthians*, when the Heathens had offered a Sacrifice to an Idol, part of the Sacrifice was reserved, and either sold at the *Shambles*, or used in *a Feast*, to which the Heathens sometimes invited their *Christian Acquaintance* or Relations. Those that went, (*knowing that an Idol was nothing*) eat what was set before them, *without* any regard to the Idol, and *making no question for Conscience sake:* by their example, others *that had not that knowledg*, 1 Cor. 8. 7. *were emboldned*, not only to eat against their scruples and doubts of Conscience, (which is all that many Interpreters think to be intended in that place) but also (as the words make probable) with some *positive regard* to the Idol; so that by the examples of those that sate in the Idols Temple, eating what was set before them as *common Meat*, others *misinterpreting* their Actions, proceeded to eat with *a Conscience of the Idol*, as if the Idol had been something indeed, and deserving a *conscientious regard*. Not unlike to this was that Art of *Julian*, mentioned by *Sozomen*, whereby he endeavoured to *twist* something of *Paganism* with Actions and things that were lawful or necessary: He caused the Images of *Mars* and *Mercury* to be placed by his *own*, so that the respects that were payed to the Emperours *Picture*, seemed to carry a *concomitancy* of reverence to those *Idols:* He also (in prosecution of the same policy) caused their Meats and Drinks to be sprinkled or mixed with the *lustral Water*, that so every one that used them, might be *inured* to give some regard to his Idols; and that some, at least, might be engaged to a *justification* of that and such other practices.

Sozomeni Eccl. Hist. *l.* 5. *c.* 16.

All these are but Instances of Satans silent insinuation, by which he secretly steals the Affections, and through these, taints the Judgment. Next follows,

A second Plot upon the Affections, which is an endeavour to entangle them by the *external garb* of Errour. In this he works by

by two *contrary extreams*, that he may the better prevail with Mens different diſpoſitions.

Firſt, He ſometimes cloaths a falſe Doctrine with the moſt *pompous*, *gorgeous*, *delightful* Attire, that like *Solomons* Harlot it may entice thoſe that are pleaſed with the higheſt gratifications of the ſenſes, *I have decked my Bed with Coverings of Tapeſtry, with fine Linnen of* Egypt, *&c.* Moſt Men that are given up to an *Animal life*, cannot be pleaſed with any Religion but ſuch as may moſt *pleaſe the ſenſes*; they ſo diſreliſh the *ſimplicity* of the Goſpel (which is, notwithſtanding, its particular *mark* and *honour*, 2 *Cor.* 11. 3.) that they cannot perſwade themſelves they do any thing in religious Worſhip, except they abound in *coſtly ceremonious obſervances*. Thus do ſome interpret that *fear* of the Heathens, which firſt put them upon *Images* and outward repreſentations of their Gods; they were affraid they ſhould not have any Religion to their *own ſatisfaction*, except they proceeded in ſuch a courſe as might make their ſenſes ſure that they were doing ſomething: the Devil knowing well the force of *external beauties* in Religion, prepared theway to Idolatry by it. They had their *coſtly Temples*, ſome of them admirable for Antiquity and Magnificence, enriched with Gifts and Offerings, excellent for Matter and Workmanſhip, adorned with Images, Lamps, Beds, and Tables of Gold, beautified by Art, and natural pleaſantneſs of Scituation; they had alſo their Groves in the moſt pleaſant and delightful Places, as that of the *Daphne* beſides *Antiochia*, which was invironed with tall Cypreſs Trees, ten Miles about, and within adorned with the ſumptuous Temples of *Apollo* and *Diana*'s Sanctuary; in theſe places they had their Muſick and ſolemn Feſtivals, which were ſometimes extraordinary, for coſt and continuance. *Antiochus* at *Daphne* continued an incredible ſolemnity, with a vaſt train and coſtly preparation for thirty days together; and that nothing might be wanting, they had their Annual Feaſts, Sacrifices, Rites, the Adornments of their Prieſts, their white Garments, their Coats of divers Colours, their Miters, *&c.* in a word, nothing was lacking that might pleaſe the Eye or Ear. And doubtleſs the Devil found this courſe very ſucceſsful to win the Affections of Men to *Gentiliſm*. And if it were not for *this* conſideration, it might be admired that the *Jews* (who were inſtructed in the true Worſhip of God) ſhould, notwithſtanding, be ſo *prone* to Idolatry, and ſo *hardly* drawn from it: but, ſurely

Primus in orbe Deos timor fecit.

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their strong inclinations that way proceeded from a natural delight that Men have in a *sensual* Religion, which by a powerful Witchcraft doth inchant them to an excess of love. The same method the Devil takes in *Popery*, the chief inticement lies in its glorious *external appearance*; all their religious places are dressed up in the highest bravery, they are beautified with Images and Pictures, with Lights and costly Adornments; they abound in Rites, Ceremonies, Gestures, and Observances, and all this is but to dazle the Eyes, and to win a reverence in Men to their Worship; and accordingly, they practise in these exteriour things on purpose to ravish Mens Affections; their Children are brought up to a confirmed delight and resolution for Popery, by pleasing them with Shews, Pictures, Representations, Processions, and grateful Observances. If a Stranger of another Religion come among them, then as their first essay, they shew them all their Play-things, that their Affections may be tickled with the outward pomp and ornament of their way, for they know by experience, that a *glittering out-side*, and *a great deal ado* of bodily labour, is the All of most Mens Religion; if it have but *Body* enough, they never enquire whether it have *Spirit* or Life within: a dead *Carcass in Robes*, that may put them to the exercise of their *Postures*, and ceremonious Complements, doth make up a *more grateful* Religion for a carnal Man, than a *living*, *spiritual* Service, that necessarily will put them upon *inward* care and watchfulness in the *constant* exercise of holy *Spiritual* Graces, without affording any considerable *gratification* to the Senses: Hence is it truly more difficult, (and yet inwardly more beautiful and glorious) to *pray in Faith and Humility*, even in short breathings after God, than to say a *thousand Ave Maria's*, or to perform a task of ordinary *Penance*. But as those that have no Children of their own, delight themselves in playing with a *Monkey* or *Baboon*, so those that know not how to worship God *in Spirit and Truth*, seek to satisfie themselves in the performance of *external Gesture* and Ceremony.

Secondly, On the other hand; he sometimes is willing that an Errour should affect an *excess of plainness* and simplicity. In this he takes advantage of those expressions in Scripture, wherein the Gospel is commended for its *simplicity*, and the inventions of Men under the pretences of *Wisdom*, *Humility*, and *neglecting of the Body* are condemned. Upon this ground, he runs Men upon such

ſuch an exceſs of dotage, that they never think the things of God are rightly managed but when they are brought down to a *contemptible ſillineſs.* By this means he arms conceited ignorant Men with exceptions againſt *Learning*, and the neceſſary *decencies* of languague in Preaching; and with them they are the *only* Preachers, and moſt likely to be *inſpired* that uſe *leaſt* ſtudy and preparation for their work. 'Tis indeed very true, that the affected *fooleries* of a *bombaſt* Stile, or *ſtartcht Diſcourſe*, and needleſs *citations* of Sentences for oſtentation, without any true advantage to the *matter* in hand, are things very *pedantick*, and exceedingly unſuitable to the *gravity* of the Work of the Miniſtry, and renders it very ungrateful to a pious Mind: but this *contrary folly* makes the ſolemn Ordinances of God ſo *nauſeous* and contemptible, that it often makes way (by Satan's cunning improvement of the Temptation) to an *Atheiſtical* rejection of all Worſhip. In the mean time 'tis wonderful to obſerve, how ſome Perſons pleaſe themſelves with this conceit, that their way of Worſhip is plain, and that they ſpeak what *immediately* comes into their Mind; and though it be *Non-ſenſe* or Contradictions (which ſufficiently evidenceth that 'tis nothing of *kin* to the *Spirits Inſpiration*) which they utter, yet 'tis argument enough to them, that their opinions and ways are right, becauſe they proceed in a *deſigned* neglect of all neceſſary order, and under pretence of the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, they reduce all they do to childiſh ſillineſs. Neither is this all the miſchief which the Devil raiſeth out of this conceit, for the contempt and diſuſe of the Sacraments, may in great part be aſcribed to it. Thoſe erroneous ways of Worſhip that are moſt noted for decrying thoſe Inſtitutions of Chriſt, have this for their Plea, that the Worſhip which God is beſt pleaſed with, is *ſpiritual*, and that all *bodily* ſervices and *external* obſervations are things that God ſtands not upon, ſuch as *profit little*, and were no further in uſe, but to *recommend* an internal ſpiritual communion with God; ſo that the more they *reject* theſe things, they perſwade themſelves they have a more *true underſtanding* of the deſign of God in Religion. Either of theſe ways Satan makes uſe of for the befooling of Men into an humour of pleaſing themſelves with Errour. But,

Thirdly, He hath of old endeavoured to cloud and enervate the Doctrine of the Bible by *traditionary Fables.* We meet with many paſſages to this purpoſe: ſometimes he ſets up *unwritten* Traditions,

Traditions, not only of *equal* authority to the written Word, but as *completions* and perfections of it. This he practised among the *Jews* with such success, that the *Traditions of the Elders* were of greater force with them than the *Commands* of God, as Christ himself noted of them, *Matth.* 15. 13. Of these unwritten Traditions (which they called *the Law by the word of Mouth*, feigned by them to be given to *Moses* when he was in the Mount, and so delivered from hand to hand) the Apostles gave many warnings, and signified the hazards that Truth stood in by them, through the cunning of Satan, as *Col.* 2. 8. *Beware lest any man spoil you —— through the Traditions of Men.* 1 Tim. 1. 4. *Neither give heed to Fables, and endless Genealogies.* Tit. 1. 14. *Not giving heed to Jewish Fables, and Commandments of Men.* — 2 Tim. 4. 4. *And they shall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto Fables.*

The *Papists* at this day give the same entertainment to this device that the *Jews* did of old, they boast as high of their *Traditions*, and are every whit as *fabulous* and foolish in them as they were. Satan in his attempts upon the *Gentiles* to confirm them in their false Worship, though he kept up the *substance* of this design, yet he was necessitated to alter the *scene* a little, that he might more handsomly accommodate it to their condition; and therefore he set up amongst them *fabulous imitations* of the Truths and Ordinances of the Scripture, insomuch that there is scarce any grand Mystery, or remarkable History, or Ordinance mentioned in the Scripture, but we may find something among the Heathens in Tradition or Practice that doth allude to it. What traditionary *imitations* had they of the *Creation* recorded in the Book of *Genesis*? That of *Ovid* concerning the *Chaos* and first beginning of things, is known to every School-Boy. The *Phœnicians* in their Theology give an odd account of it, from their *Taautus*, to this purpose, *That the first beginnings of all things were a dark disordered Chaos, and the spirit of the dark Air; hence proceeded Moth, that is Mire, from thence issued the Seeds and Generation of all Creatures in Earth and Heaven*, &c. The wickedness of Men before the Flood, (mentioned *Gen.* 6. 1, 2.) is fabulously related in an ancient Book, (falsly ascribed to *Enoch*) wherein the *Watchmen or Angels are reported to take them Wives of the Daughters of Men, and that from thence was the race of Giants.* For the description of Paradise, the Heathens had the *Poetical Fiction* of the *Elyzian Fields*,

Purchas Pilg. l. 1. c. 17.

Vid. *Scaligeri* notas in *Euseb. Chron.* p. 244.

Fields, as they had the Story of *Deucalion*, instead of *Noahs* Ark and the Deluge. The Story of *Lots Wife* was abused by the Fiction of *Orpheus* his Wife, suddenly snatched from him for looking back. The History of *Sampson* was turned into their Story of *Hercules* and his ten labours. From the Sun standing still in *Joshua* and *Hezekiahs* time, came that Fiction of *Jupiters* doubling the night, that he might enjoy *Alcmena*. In some of these disguises of sacred Story, they go so near in name and circumstances that 'tis past doubt they imitated the true History, which they corrupted: for instance, *Herodotus* relates, that *Sethon* King of *Egypt* and Priest of *Vulcan*, was helped by his God *from Heaven against Senacherib*, which plainly relates to *Hezekiah* King of *Juda*, and the wonders that God did for him. So in imitation of *Uriahs* Letters to *Joab* for his own destruction, we have in *Homer* and others the Story of *Prætus*, sending Letters to *Jobatus* by *Bellerophon*, wherein his death was commanded; the near affinity of the names *Joab* and *Jobatus*, shews with what Heifer the Devil plowed. The History of *Abraham*'s offering up *Isaac*, is by *Porphiry* applied to *Saturn*, who saith, he was by the *Phænicians* called *Israel*, he had by *Anobreth* one only Son, called *Jeud* (an evident allusion (saith *Godwin*, Antiq. *lib.* 4. *cap.* 3.) to *Gen.* 22. 2. where *Isaac* is in the Hebrew called *Jechid*, that is an only begotten) him he offered up on an Altar purposely prepared; here not only the *matter*, but the *names* do clearly shew, that *Abraham*'s Story is imitated in this. The like imitation I might shew to have been among the Heathen, of *doctrinal* Truths, as of the sacred Mystery of the *Trinity*. In *Peru* they worship the *Father*, *Son*, and *Brother*; as also their *Tangatauga*, which they say was *one* in *three*, and *three* in *one*. But their imitation of *Ordinances* is every where remarkable, so that I need say nothing of their Temples, Priests, Sacrifices, and other Religious Rites; only the Devil's imitation of the *Sacraments* of the *New Testament* deserves particular observation: Instances of an Apish imitation of *Baptism* are every where obvious, and that of the *Lords Supper* or Christian Communion was frequently resembled in the chief *Peruvian* Feasts, where they carried *small Loaves* of Bread in great Platters of Gold, of which all present received, and eat little *pieces*, and this as a *sign* of honour and profession of obedience to their Gods, and the *Ingua*. Not unlike to this were those *morsels* of Paste, which the *Mexicans* used in their Religious

Lib. 2. *mentioned also by* Josephus *Antiq. Jews*. l. 10. c. 1.

Purchas Pilg. America. l. 9. c. 12.

Purchas ibid.

Feasts, which they laid at their Idols Feet, consecrating them by Singing and other Ceremonies, and then they called them *the Flesh and Bones* of their God *Vitzilipu tzli*, (alluding directly to that of our Saviour, *This is my Body*, &c. insomuch that *Acosta* thought the Devil mocked their *Transubstantiation* by it;) this was distributed among all, and was eaten with a great deal of reverence, fear, and devotion.

Purchas l. 8. c. 13.

We may see by those instances, that in these fabulous imaginations of Truth, the Devil hath industriously traded, and that which he aimed at in this design may easily be conjectured to be,

1. The *despiting and discrediting* of Truth; he renders it (by this means) *suspitious* of some Forgery, as if the Scripture were no better than an uncertain Tradition, as if (at the best) it were doubtful, whether Scripture or these traditionary Fables had better authority.

2. He further intends the *intanglement* of the Affections to Errour, by this Device; for he doth, as it were, take the *spoils* of the *Tabernacle* to adorn his *Dagon* withal, and without doubt the *Heathens* were very much *hardned* in *Gentilism* by these traditionary Stories; hence, one observes, the Devil imitated the History of the Miracle done in favour of *Hezekiah*, that the Scriptures might lose their *credit* and authority, and that the *glory* of such a wonder might be transferred to their *Idols*; and the consequence of both these, is

Ita Diabolus hoc egit ut divinum miraculum in *Judæa* editum vilesceret, fidem & authoritatem amitteret, & tanti operis gloria ad turpissima idola rediret. *Bucholcer.*

3. To *deprive* the Truth of its *convincing power* upon the consciences of Men. The principles of Scripture *convince* by the *evidence* of their Truth: If that Truth be *questioned* by the substitution of another *Competitor*, it presently loseth its force, and the commands thereof are disregarded, upon a supposition of its *uncertainty*.

4. Another of his ways to betray the understanding by the Affections, is by putting Men upon *an accommodation* of Truth, to a *complyance* with Parties differing from it. And this hath been so much the more successful, because it hath begun, and been carried on upon the most *specious* pretences. The *avoiding* of Offences; the *smoothing* of the way of Religion, for the gaining of the contrary minded; the *preservation* of Peace and Unity, are Pleas very plausible; and really upon the account of these things, the Scripture (both by its Precepts and Examples) hath recommended to us *condescentions* and Brotherly *forbearances*. The

Jews

Jews (who were dissatisfied at the first publication of the liberty from the Yoke of *Mosaical* Ceremonies, purchased for us by Christ) were *indulged* in the use of Circumcision, and observance of the difference of Meats for a long time, till they might be the better satisfied in the Truth. These pretences the Devil makes use of to undermine Truth. And pleasing his Agents with the honour of a *pious design*, (and it may be at first really *so intended* by them) he prevails with them, not only for a *present condescention* to Men of contrary practice, but to cast the principles of Truth into such a *fixed Mould* that they may carry a more *near resemblance* to those Opinions which they do most *directly* oppose. The *appearance* of sanctity, peaceableness, prudence, and successfulness in such an undertaking, doth exceedingly animate the *well-meaning* designers, which Satan, in the mean time, carries them beyond all bounds, and so dangerously fixeth an *unnatural representation* of Truth, that it loseth its own splendor, and settles at last upon *unsafe* notions. Thus by the *continuance* of such a *complyance*, Errour begins to *recruit* its Forces, and is as likely to *draw over* Truth wholly to its side, (by the argument of *resemblance*, and the consequences following thereupon) as Truth is wholly to *extirpate* and conquer Errour ; and if it do not that, succeeding Ages (that minded not the first design) finding things so continued to them in deep *reverence* to their Predecessors, form their *prudential condescentions* into *perverse opinions*.

If we follow the *tract* of Time from the first preaching of the Gospel, we may find Satan's *footsteps* all along. In the Apostles times, when the believing *Jews* were tollerated *necessarily* (till time and experience might fully convince them) in their observation of the Law of *Moses*, (which was certainly given of *God*, and so might very easily occasion an opinion of the continuance of it, *Act.* 15. 1, 5.) though the Apostles did not at all *accommodate* the *standing* precepts of the New Testament to carry a *perpetual resemblance* of that Opinion, neither did they *still* countenance that practice, but did *seasonably* and *fully* declare against it, exhorting Christians *to stand in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free*, Gal. 5. 1, 2. yet Satan was busie to take *advantage* of the present forbearances, which the Holy Ghost had directed them unto ; insomuch that instead of *convincing* all the dissenters by that *lenity*, some dissenters waxed *bold* to perswade the Christians *to another Gospel* : But after their days the Devil pursued

this design with greater scope; for instance, in *Constantines* time, when the *Gentiles* flocked into the Church with *dirty Feet*, and in their *old Rags*, they were tollerated in some *old customs* of Gentilism, and upon a design to win them, they made bold to *bend* the *Doctrine* of the Gospel toward their *former usages:* they thought indeed it was best to wink at things, and not to bear too hard upon them at first, but that tollerating a *lesser* evil, they might avoid a *greater* inconvenience; and withall they deemed they had done great service to the Church and Christian Religion, if they could any way divert the Heathen from Worshipping their *Idols*: And to effect this the easilier, they seemed to cherish *their* customs and rites of Worship, as consonant in the *general*, to the Principles of Christianity, only they excepted against the *Object* of their Worship as unlawful, so that upon the matter they did no more than change *the name.* The manifold inconveniences that followed this kind of dealing, they did not discover at first; but besides the *infecting* the simplicity of Christian Religion with the *dirt* and dregs of *Paganism*, (which they might easily have seen) Time hath since discovered, that here the Devil secretly laid the chief foundations of *Popery.*

Whosoever shall impartially compare the Rites, Customs, Usages and Garbs of *Popery*, with those of *Paganism*, will, to his admiration, find such an exact *agreement* and consonancy, that he must necessarily conclude that either *Paganism* imitated *Popery*, or *Popery* imitated *Paganism*; but the latter is true, and that these corruptions in Religion by *Popery* came in by *a designment of conforming Christianity to Heathenism*, (though it may be upon *pious* intentions at first) is no difficult thing to evince; for (besides that the Rites of Paganism were more *ancient*, and so could not be borrowed from Popery which came *long after*) the Scripture did foretel a great *defection* from Truth, which should be in the *last days*, and this *under a profession* of Religion; and the things *particularized*, are such, as shew that the defection should carry an *imitation* of Paganism; for no less seems to be signified by 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. *The Spirit speaketh expresly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits, and Doctrines of Devils*; that is, as Mr. *Mede* (whose interpretation I follow) doth prove, Doctrines *concerning* Devils or *Dæmons* (as in *Heb.*6.2. we have the phrase of *Doctrines of Baptisms*, which must needs signify *Doctrines concerning Baptisms*) the Gentile *Theology* of

Apostacy of the latter times.

Dæmons

Dæmons is the thing which *Paul* prophesies should be introduced into Christianity. How clearly this relates to *Popery* may be evident to any that doth not wilfully blind himself by prejudice. Their Doctrine of *Dæmons* was this: they supposed *two sorts* of Gods, *supream* and *inferiour*; the supream they supposed did dwell in the *Heavenly Lights*, Sun, Moon, and Stars, without *change* of place; these they judged were so *sublime* and pure, that they might not be prophaned with the approach of earthly things; and that *immediate* approaches to them were *derogatory* to their Soveraignty. The inferiour order of Gods they imagined were of a *middle sort*, betwixt the *supream* Beings and Men, as participating of *both*: these they called *Mediators* and Agents, and supposed their business was to *carry up Mens Prayers to God*, and to *bring down Blessings* from God upon Men; these were in Scripture called *Baalim*, and by the Greeks *Dæmons*: to this purpose *Austin* and others speak. De *Civit. Dei.* l. 8. c. 14, 18.

Now these *Dæmons*, they supposed, were the *souls of dead Men* that had been more than ordinarily famous in their generation. Thus *Ninus* made an Image to his Father *Belus* after he was dead, and caused him to be worshipped. *Hermes* confesseth that *Æsculapius* Grand-father to *Asclepius*, and *Mercury* his own Grand-father, were worshipped as Gods of *this order*. Abundance of instances I might produce to this purpose; but to go on, these *Dæmons*, because to them was committed the care of *Terrestrial* affairs, (as *Celsus* argues against *Origen*,) and because of the *help* and advantage that Men might receive from them, they supposed it *gratitude* and duty to *worship* them, and this worship they performed at their *Images Sepulchres* and *Reliques*. To this purpose *Plutarch* tells us of *Theseus* his Bones, and *Plato* of the θήκαι or Shrines of their *Dæmons*.

Vid. *Du Plessis* of the truenes of Christian Religion, *cap.* 22.

Origen Cont. Cels. lib. 8. p. 416.

Plutarch in vita *Thesei* & *Demetrii*.

How evident is it that the *Papists* in their Doctrine and Practice about the Invocation of Saints and Angels, have writ after this Copy, and that they are the Men that have introduced this *Doctrine of Dæmons*, the thing it self declares without further evidence? Had the *Heathens* their *dead Hero's* for Agents 'twixt the *supream Gods* and *Men*? so have the *Papists* their *dead Saints* to offer up their Prayers. Did the *Heathen* expect more *particular aids* from some of these *Dæmons* in several cases than from others? so do the *Papists*: instead of *Diana* for Women in labour, and *Æsculapius* for the diseased, they have their St. *Margaret* and

St. *Mary*,

St. *Mary* for Travelling; *Sebastian* and *Roch* against the *Pestilence*; *Apollonia* against the Toothach; St. *Nicholas* against Tempests,*&c.* Did the Heathen *pray* to these *Dæmons* for their aid? so do the Papists to their *Saints*, as their *Breviaries*, *Rosaries*, and *Ladies Psalters* testify. Had the Heathen their *Feasts*, their *Statas ferias* to their *Dæmons*? so have the Papists. Had they their *Februalia & Proserpinilia* with Torches and Lights? so have the Papists their *Candlemas* with Lights. Did the Heathen *erect Images* and Pillars, or keep the Ashes and Shrines of their *Dæmons*? so do the Papists: the one had *Processions* and *Adorations*, so have the other; and a great many more things there are wherein Popery keeps a correspondence with Heathenisin. To this purpose you may read enough in *Monsieur de Croy*, *of the three Conformities*.

To make it yet more clear that the corruptions in Religion by Popery came in by the design of *suiting Christian Religion to Paganism*, I shall in a testimony or two shew you that they *professedly avouched* the design. *Gregory* the Great writes chidingly to *Serenus* Bishop of *Marseilles* (who it seems was no forward Man in this matter) to this purpose, *Thou shouldest have considered that thou didst converse chiefly with the* Gentiles, *to whom Pictures are instead of Reading*, *to the end that no offence be given them under colour of lawful zeal wherewith thou art not cunningly endued.* And in another Epistle to *Mellitus*, he adviseth, *That the Honours and Offerings which the Heathens gave to their* Dæmons, *should be transferred to the Martyrs*, *and their Relickes*, and gives this reason for it, *it is impossible* (saith he) *to cut off all at once from stubborn minds.* *Eusebius* also endeavours to perswade to Christianity by this Argument, that the *Christians custom of honouring the memories of the Martyrs*, *and solemnly assembling at their Sepulchres*, *did agree with the custom of the* Gentiles *of doing the like honour to their* Dæmons, and having mentioned what *Hesiod* speaks, concerning *Plato*'s Opinion, that their Champions became *Dæmons* after death, Helpers and Protectors of Men; for which cause they were *worshipped* at their Sepulchres *as Gods*; he adds to this purpose, that *if these honours had been given to the Favorites of God*, *and Champions of true Religion*, *it had been well enough:* and for this shews the example and custom of Christians then to go to the Tombs of Martyrs, there to pray in honour of their blessed Spirits. And although at first they might be *more modest* in honouring the Martyrs than *now* they are, according to that of *Austin*, *These Observances*

Lib. 9. Epist. 9.

Lib. 9. Epist. 71.

Nam duris mentibus simul omnia abscindere impossible est.

Vid. *Perkins* Prepar. to Demonst. of the Prob. *c.* 3.

Præpar. Evan l. 13. c. 7.

Observances at the Tombs of Martyrs (saith he) *are only Ornaments of their Memories, not Sacrifices to them as to Gods.* Yet this soon slid into *greater Abuse*, insomuch that *Lud. Vives*, in his Notes on that Chapter, blames those of his own time for worshipping Saints as Gods, and tells us he cannot see the Difference betwixt the Opinion *concerning Saints* (as generally practised) and that of the Heathens concerning *their Gods*. I might add the positive acknowledgment of *Beatus Rhenanus*, *Jacobus de Voragine*, concerning the burning of Candles to the Virgin *Mary*, which Custom they confest was *borrowed from the Heathens*, with a respect to the frowardness of Paganism, and a design not to exasperate them, that they might gain them.

De Civit. Dei. *lib* 8. *cap*.27. Ornamenta sunt memoriarum non sacrificia mortuorum. Non video in multis quid sit discrimen inter eorum opinionem de sanctis & id quod Gentiles putabant de diis suis.

I might also shew, that the Mischeif of this Design, of *accomodating Truth to a compliance with different Parties.*, hath not only shewn it self in introducing strange *Actions* and *Ceremonies*; but hath also discovered it self in leavening Mens *Judgments* in reference to *Opinion*. *Calvin* conjectures that those confident Assertions of the *Powers of Nature*, were first occasioned by an over-*officious willingness* to reconcile the *Doctrine* of the Scripture with the *Opinions* of Philosophy; and that Men, being unwilling to run the hazard of the Scorn which they might meet with in contradicting the general received Principles of Philosophers, were willing to form the Doctrine of Truth relating to Human Ability accordingly. Abundance of Instances of this kind may be given. Whence came the Doctrine of Purgatory, but from hence? 'Tis but * *Plato*'s Philosophy Christianized by the *Roman* Synagouge. He divided all Men into three Ranks; the *Virtuous*, who are placed by him in the *Elysian* Feilds; the *desperate Ungodly*, these he adjudgeth to *everlasting Fire*; and a *third sort*, betwixt the perfectly Virtuous and the desperately Wicked, he sendeth to *Acheron*, to be *purged* by Punishment. All this † *Eusebius* makes mention of at large. That the Papists derived their Purgatory from hence, is generally affirmed by Protestants, nay not only in these Cases, but in very many more, Corruptions have entred into Christianity, by an over eager endeavour to make the *Doctrine* of the *Scriptures* to run even with the *Sayings* and Assertions of the *Schools* of Philosophers; a thing complained of old by *Tertullian*, who plainly affirmed the *Philosophers* to be the Patriarchs of the *Hereticks*. To which agrees that Observation of Dr. *Owen*, That those who either apologized for Christians, or refuted the Ob-

Institut. lib. 2. cap. 2. §. 4. Veteres mihi videntur hoc consilio vires humanas sic extulisse ne si impotentiam diserte essent confessi Philosophorum cachinnos excuterent— Scripturæ doctrinam cum Philosophiæ dogmatibus dimidiam ex parte conciliare studium illis fui.

* *Plato* lib. 10. de Rep. Dial.

† De Præpar. Evang. l. 11. cap. ult.

Chemnitii Exam. Concil. Trident *p*.3. in hist Purgator. c. 1.

Objections of the Heathens against Christianity, frequently cited the Opinions or Sentences of the Philosophers, and *accommodated* them to their purpose, that so they might beget in their Adversaries more friendly Perswasions towards the Christian Religion, by evidencing, that the Mysteries thereof were not absurd, nor dissonant from Reason, seeing they might be justified by the Sayings of their *own Philosophers*. And *here was laid, in this Design and its Prosecution, (and surely it pleased its Undertakers not a little) the Foundation of that Evil which Religion hath since groaned under, that Men made bold with the tremendous Mysteries of Christianity, to accommodate them unwarily to the Notions of the Gentiles*. And this the Apostle *Paul* foresaw in that Caution he gave *Col.* 2. 8. *Beware lest any Man spoil you through Philosophy, and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of Men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Christ*. Certainly the Snare is neither unusual, nor weak, where the Caution is so serious. 'Tis a thing naturally pleasing, to be the Inventer of any new thing, or to make new *Discoveries* in Religion, to raise new Hypotheses, or to adventure in *unbeaten* Paths, for a *Reconcilement* of Religion to any Notion, or Practice, famous for its *Antiquity*, or pretence to *Beauty* and *Decency*. Men hug themselves when they can make several things to hit right, and an exact suiting of Parallels is instead of Demonstration. By this foolish delight the Devil makes Men bold to make Essays; and what doth answer their humour, passeth currant for undoubted Truth.

Hinc prima mali labes, dum cœlestia mysteria & tremenda Christianarum sacra Gentilium notionibus & vanis ceremoniis attemperare voluerint. *Owen Disser. De Verbo.* §. 16.

5. He doth sometime blind the Understanding, by working up the Affections to such an *earnest Opposition* to some Error, that in a *forward* haste they cast the Mind upon a *contrary Extreme*: so that through an hasty violent avoidance of one Error, they are cast upon a contrary, and (it may be) as dangerous as that they fly from. And this the Devil doth with great ease, having the plausible pretence of *Zeal*, and *Care* to Truth, wherein the Affections being highly ingaged, the Mind in a careless *Confidence* doth easily *overshoot* the Truth, (which commonly lies in the middle) and thinks it doth well enough, if it gives the *greatest Contradiction* to the Error now to be abominated. Men in this Case, having their eyes only fixed upon what they *would avoid*, consider not so much whither they are going, as *from what* they go. So that seeking (as Men in a fright) to avoid the Pit that is *before* them, they run backward into another *behind* them.

This

This is ſuch a noted Stratagem of Satan, that all Men take notice of it in the general, though all Men do not improve the Diſcovery for their own particular Caution. The *wiſeſt* of Men are often ſo befooled by their violent reſiſtance of an *Untruth*, that they readily overſhoot themſelves and miſs the Mark. The *Fathers* in the heat of diſpute ſaid many things ſo inconveniently, that thoſe who come after, do ſee and lament theſe *haſty Overſights*; and have no other way to *ſalve* their Credit, but by giving *this Obſervation* in excuſe for them. And it may be obſerved that ſome Errors which have riſen from this Root *at firſt*, have ſo ſtrongly fixed themſelves, that they have grown up to the great annoyance of the Truth; while the contrary Errors that did occaſion them are forgotten, and their memories are periſhed. I ſhall but inſtance in one inſtead of many, and that ſhall be *Arrianiſm*; how ſadly prevalent that hath been in its time, all Men know that know any thing of Church Hiſtory; the Chriſtian World once groaned under it. But that which gave the firſt occaſion to *Arrius* to fix himſelf in that Error, was the Doctrine of *Alexander*, who diſcourſing of the *Unity* in the *Trinity* too nicely, ſeemed to juſtify the Error of *Sabellius*, who had taught (as alſo *Noetus* before) that there was but *one Perſon* in the Trinity, called by divers *Names* of *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*, according to different occaſions; the Trinity (according to his Doctrine) being not of *Perſons*, but of *Names* and Functions. While *Arrius* was diſſatisfied with this account of the Trinity, he ran to a *contrary Extreme*; and that he might give the higheſt proof of a Trinity of *Perſons*, he affirmed that Jeſus Chriſt had a *beginning*, and that there was a time when he was not, &c. Thus *Socrates* ſpeaks of the Riſe of that Hereſy.

Socr. Eccleſ. Hiſtor. lib. 1. cap. 3.

We might further follow the footſteps of this Device, and trace it in moſt Opinions; where we might find the humour of running to a contrary Extreme, hath ſtill either ſet up a contrary Error, or at leaſt leavened the Truth with *harſh* and *unjuſtifiable* Expreſſions and Explanations. The Diſputes betwixt *Faith* and *Works*, have been thus occaſioned and aggravated. Some ſpeak ſo of *Faith*, as if they *ſlighted Works*; others ſo urge a *neceſſity of Works*, as if they intended to make *Faith uſeleſs*. Some talk of *Grace* to an utter *Contempt* of *Morality*; others on the contrary magnify *Morality* to the *annihilating* of *Grace*. Some in their practice acquieſce in the *outward Performance* of Ordinances: if

they pray or receive the Sacraments, (though never so formally) they are at peace, supposing they have done all that is required; others observing the Mistake, and knowing that God looks more to the performance of the Soul and Spirit, than to the Act of the Body, upon a pretence of worshipping God in Spirit, throw off the observation of his Ordinances altogether. Neither is there any thing that doth more generally and apparently undoe us in the present Dissentions, (as many have complained) than Mens violent *Over-doing*, and running to contrary Extremes.

6. Satan makes use of *Rewards*, or *Punishments*, on the one hand to *bribe*, or on the other to *force* the Affections, and they being strongly possessed, easily prevail with the Understanding to give Sentence accordingly. Men are soon perswaded to take that for Truth which they see will be *advantageous* to them. Some Men indeed take up with a Profession of Truth, which yet their Hearts approve not; but the Advantages they have by their Profession, do silence their dissatisfactions; these are said to use the Profession of Truth *as a Cloak of Covetousness*, 2 *Thes.* 2. 5. But others go further, and are really brought to an *Approbation* of that Doctrine or Way that makes most for their *Profit*, their Minds being really corrupted by a self-seeking Principle; they perswade themselves, (where there is any Contest about Doctrines) that that Doctrine is *true* which is *gainful*, and will accordingly dispute for it. Hence that Expression in 1 *Tim.* 6. 5. *supposing that Gain is Godliness*.

To this may be added, that the Affections are quickly sensible of the *Ease*, and *sensual Gratifications* of any Doctrine, and these are usually thrown into the same Scale to make more weight. Men have naturally a good liking to that Doctrine that promiseth fair for Ease, Liberty, Gain, and Honour; and this hath made it an usual piece of Satans business in all Ages to gild an Error with outward Advantages, and to corrupt the Mind by secret Promises of Advancement.

On the other side, he labours as much to prejudice Truth, by representing it as *hazardous* and *troublesom* to the Professors of it. And this not only affrights some from an open Confession of the Truth they believe; but also by the help of the Affections doth perswade some to believe that to be an Error, which unavoidably brings Persecution with it: By this Engine are the Minds of Men turned about to think well or ill of a Doctrine presented

to

to them. This is so well known, that I shall forbear a further Prosecution of this Head, and go to the next Course that Satan takes to corrupt the Judgment by the Affections; Which he doth,

7. By stirring up some *particular Passions*, which in Opinions do usually more influence the *Understanding*. And here I shall only insist upon these two, *Pride*, and *Anger*; with the peculiar means that Satan hath to engage them in his Service.

That Pride and Anger are the two usual *Firebrands* of Contention, and Fountains of Error, all Ages have acknowledged and bewailed. These two *Companions in Evil* do so darken the Mind, that the miserable Captive, in whom they domineer, is carryed blindfold he knows not whither, nor how. Pride usually begins, and Anger follows with all its forces to justify what Pride hath undertaken. Hence the Apostle in 1 *Tim.* 6. 4. rakes up all the concomitant Filth of Error, as *Envy*, *Strife*, *Railings*, *evil Surmisings*, and *perverse Disputings of Men*, and lays them at the Door of *Pride*; *He is proud, knowing nothing.*

For the ingaging of these two Thieves, that *rob* the Understanding of its Light, Satan hath many *Artifices* in readiness. Pride (which is forward enough of it self) is soon excited, by laying before it an Opportunity of a seeming *rare Discovery*, or of advancing the *Glory of Knowledge* above the common Pitch, of being *seen* and admired as more excellent than others, *&c.* (for upon such unworthy Grounds have some dared to adventure upon strange Notions) yet there is nothing that doth more firmly ingage it, than Contention or *Dispute*: for though the proper end of Disputation be the *sifting out* of Truth; yet such is Mans Pride, and Satans Advantage by it, that it seldom attains its true end in *those that are ingaged*. By-standers, that keep their Minds calm, and unbyassed, may receive more satisfaction than the Contenders themselves; and there needs no other evidence of this, than the common Experience which Men have of our frequent Contentions; where we have Confutations, Answers and Replies, and yet still all Parties continue in their Opinions without Conviction. So that they that would unfeignedly seek Truth, (in my Mind) take not the best Course in their Pursuit, that presently engage themselves in a *publick Dispute*; for the usual Heats that are begot in a Contention alienate their Minds from a just *Impartiality*, and the dust they raise blinds their Eyes, that they discern not

 truly.

truly. Let us look into this Artifice of engaging Pride by Disputation, and by it the Judgment. First we find, that when an humor of contending is raised, *certain* Truths are neglected, as to their improvement and Practice; For so much of the Strength of the Soul is laid out upon *disputable Questions*, that little is left for more *weighty matters*. Secondly, In Disputes Mens Credit is so concerned, that 'tis a most difficult thing to preserve a *faithful* regard to Verity, especially where they are managed with *Affronts* and *Contumelies*. They that by *calm handling* might be induced to acknowledge a Mistake, will scarce *come near* that Point of Ingenuity, when they must be called *Fool*, *Knave*, or *Ass* for their labour. Hence ordinarily (though they profess otherwise) Men seek rather Victory than Truth. Thirdly, in Disputes Pride and Passion are usually heightned, and the *stronger* the Passions are, the *weaker* is the Judgment. Eager Altercations bring a Confusion, both upon the matter of which they dispute, and upon the Understanding that should judge. Fourthly, in the heat of Disputation, when the Mind is inflamed, Men usually behave themselves like those in a *Fray*, where they snatch and throw any thing that comes to hand, and never mind where it hits; they will affirm or deny any thing that may seem any way to bring them off. Fifthly, these Assertions being *once affirmed*, must be *maintained*, and so Errors and Contentions increase without end. Disputes fix a Man in his Perswasion, and do as it were tye him to the Stake, so that right or wrong he will go through with it. Sixthly, Some dispute in jest against their present Judgment, and yet at last dispute themselves into a *belief* of what they *wantonly* at first affirmed; as some tell Lies so long, that at length they believe them to be true. Seventhly, A sadder Mischief often follows a disputing Humor, which is an hazard of the loss of *all Truth*; Men dispute so long till they suspect *all things*, and after a long Trade of *Scepticism*, turn *Atheists*.

Contentionibus amittitur veritas, & multi eo adiguntur, ut postea nihil constitui posse certi sibi persuadeant, atq; ita religionis omne studium abjiciant. *Acont.* Strat. Satanæ, lib. 1. p. 23.

After the same manner doth the Devil *engage Anger* in all Disputes and Controversies, for it keeps company with Pride, wherever there is a Provocation. And besides this, Anger stirring up Injuries and Wrongs, hath often engaged Men (as it were *in revenge*) to change their Opinion, and to take up another Way or Doctrine. Nay often that simple Mixture of Pride and Anger which we call *Emulation*, hath privately tainted the Integrity of Mind, and prepared it for the next fair opportunity of Error.

This

This is noted of *Arrius*, by *Theodoret*, that when *Alexander* was chosen Bishop of *Alexandria*, he envied him the preferency, and from thence sought occasions of Contention, which after a little while the Devil brought to his hand, as we have heard. *Theod. Eccles. Hist. l. 1. c. 2.*

So great is the power of these two Passions over the Understanding, that we have cause to wonder at their success: seldom or never can it be shown that any *Ring-leader* in Errour was not visibly *tainted* with Pride, or not apparently *sowred* with Discontents and Emulation.

8. To these ways of blinding the Understanding by the Affections, I shall add but one more, which is this: Satan endeavours mainly to *adorn* an Errour with *Truths clothing*; he takes its Ornaments and Jewels to dress up a false Doctrine, that it may look more lovely and dutiful; I mean, that he designs (where Errours are capable of such an imitation) to put them into the *way*, *method*, *garb* and *manner* which Truth doth naturally use: If Truth be adorned with *Zeal*, *Order*, *Strictness*, or have advantageous ways of *managing* it self, Errour must straight-way imitate it in all these things; and though he that looks near, may easily discern that 'tis not the *natural complexion* of Errour, but an *artificial varnish*, and such as doth no more become it than a Court-dress doth become a course, clownish Country Person, (for you may at first look usually discover the *Wolf* under *Sheeps clothing*, and under the *garb of the Apostles of Christ* you may see *the Ministers of Satan*) yet are the credulous usually affected with these appearances; if they find a professed strictness, a seeming severity, an imitation of the ways of Truth, or of the fruits thereof, they commonly seek no further, but judg that to be Truth which doth the things that Truth doth; and if Errour can handsomly stand in competition with Truth, upon a pretence of being as effectual in *good works*, and doing things of themselves *lovely*, and of *good report*, it doth much gain upon the good liking of those whose consideration leads them not much further than fair appearances. I shall only exemplify this by the Art and policy which *Julian* used to set up *Paganism*, and to ruine Christianity, (and those who have observed the ways which he took to gain his end, will readily acknowledg he was as well skill'd in advancing Errour and suppressing Truth as any whosoever, and knew exactly to suit his designs to Mens inclinations) he observing that Christian Religion had some particular things in its

practice

practice and way, which made it's face to ſhine, as that it had Perſons ſolemnly *ſet apart by Ordination* for teaching the Myſteries of the Goſpel, and for managing the publick Worſhip of God; that theſe Perſons were to be *grave* in their carriage, and *exemplary* in a ſtrict holy converſation; that the Conſtitutions of Religion appointed certain neceſſary aud effectual ways of *Diſcipline*, for Puniſhment, and reſtoring of Offenders, and bringing them to Repentance; that it took care of the comfortable maintenance of thoſe that had given up themſelves to the Miniſtry of the Word and Prayer; that it alſo enjoyned a relief of the Poor and Strangers, *&c.* Taking notice (I ſay) of theſe Excellencies in Chriſtianity, and how lovely they were in the eyes of their enemies; He appointed the *like Conſtitutions* for Paganiſm, and ordained that the *Idol Temples* ſhould be ſuited in conveniency and *comlineſs* to Chriſtian Churches; That there ſhould be *Seats* and *Desks* for the *chief Doctors* and Readers of *Gentiliſm*, who at ſet-times were to *exhort* the People, and *pray* with them; and that *Colledges* and *Monaſteries* ſhould be erected for them, and for the *relief* of the Poor and Strangers; he commanded *Diſcipline* and *Penances* for the chaſtiſement of Offenders; he required that their Prieſts ſhould ſeriouſly *give up* themſelves to the Worſhip of God, as alſo their *Families*; that they ſhould not frequent *Shews* and *Taverns*, nor practiſe any *infamous* Trade and Art. Thus *Sozomen* reports him, and gives us a Copy of his Letter to *Arſacius* high Prieſt of *Galatia* to this purpoſe; and all this he did to bring *Gentiliſm* into credit with the Vulgar, whom he had obſerved to be affected to Chriſtianity for its Order, Strictneſs and Government.

Sozom. Eccl. Hiſt. l. 5. c. 15.

Yet is not this the only inſtance that may be given in this kind: for obſerve but any Errour that by *Schiſm* ſets up for it ſelf in a *diſtinct party*, and you ſhall ſee that though it departs from the *Truth* of the Church, and from its *Communion*, yet ſtill (as the *Iſraelites* did with the *Egyptians*) it carries away with it theſe Jewels of the Church, and keeps to ſome conſiderable part of the Churches way, (though *modified* according to its own bent) that it might have a luſtre with it, to make it taking with others.

Theſe *eight* particulars are the moſt remarkable ways of Satan, whereby the Affections are gained to a good liking of Errour, and by them the judgment *ſecondarily* corrupted to call it Truth.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Satan's Attempts against the Peace of God's Children, evidenced, (1.) By his Malice; (2.) From the concernment of Peace to God's Children. What these Concerns are, explained. (3.) From the Advantages which he hath against them by disquieting their Minds. 1. Confusion of Mind. 2. Unfitness for Duty, and how. 3. Rejection of Duty. 4. A stumbling-block to others. 5. Preparation of the Mind to entertain venemous Impressions, and what they are. 6. Bodily Weakness. 7. Our Miseries Satan's contentment.

WE have viewed the ways of Satan by which he tempts to *Sin*, by which he withdraws Men from *Duty* and Service, by which he corrupts the Mind through *Errour*; it only now remains that something be spoken of his attempts against the *Peace* and Comfort of the Children of God.

That 'tis also one of Satans chief designs to cheat us of our Spiritual Peace, may be fully evinced by a consideration of *his Malice*, *the great concern* of inward Comfort to us, and the *many Advantages* which he hath against us by the disquiet of our Minds.

First, Whosoever shall seriously consider the Devil's *implacable Malice*, will easily believe, that he so *envies* our Happiness that he will industriously rise up against all *our Comforts*. 'Tis his inward fret and indignation that Man hath any interest in that Happiness from which he irrecoverably fell, and that the Spirit of God should produce in the hearts of his People any spiritual joy or satisfaction in the belief and expectation of that Felicity, and therefore must it be expected that his Malice (heightned by the torment of his own guilt, which (as some think) are those *Chains of darkness* in which he is reserved at present, *to the judgment of the great day*) will not, cannot leave this part of our

Happiness

Happineſs unattempted. He endeavours to ſupplant us of our Birthright, of our Bleſſing, of our Salvation, and the comfortable hopes thereof. From his common imployment in this matter, the Scripture hath given him *names*, importing an oppoſition to Chriſt and his Spirit, in the ways they take for our Comfort and Satisfaction. Chriſt is our *Advocate* that pleads for us, Satan is Διάβολος, *a Calumniator*. The Spirit *interceds* for us, Satan is Κατήγορος τῶν ἀδελφῶν, *the Accuſer of the Brethren, who accuſeth them before God night and day.* The Spirit is our *Comforter*, Satan is our Diſturber, a *Beelzebub* who is ever raking in our Wounds, as Flyes upon Sores. The Apoſtle *Paul* had his Eye upon this, when he was adviſing the *Corinthians* to receive again the penitent inceſtuous Perſon, his caution was moſt ſerious, 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. *leſt Satan get advantage of us*, leſt he deceive and circumvent us, (for his expreſſion relates to Men, cunningly deceitful *in Trade*, that do over-reach and defraud the unskilful) : and the reaſon of this caution was, the known and commonly experienced ſubtilty of Satan, *for we are not ignorant of his devices*, implying that he will, and frequently doth ly at catch to take all advantages againſt us. Some indeed reſtrain theſe advantages to *Verſ.* 10. as if *Paul* only meant, that Satan was deſigning to fix the *Corinthians* upon an Opinion, that Backſliders into great Sins were *not to be received again*, or that he laid in wait to raiſe a *Schiſm* in the Church upon the account of this *Corinthian*. Others reſtrain this advantage which he waited for, to *Verſ.* 7. where the Apoſtle expreſſeth his fear, leſt the excommunicated Perſon ſhould *be ſwallowed up of too much ſorrow*; but the caution being not expreſly bound up to any one of theſe, ſeems to point at them all, and to tell us that Satan drives on many deſigns at once, and that in this Mans caſe Satan would endeavour to put the *Corinthians* upon a *Phariſaical* rigour, or to *rend* the Church by a diviſion about him, and to *oppreſs the Penitent* by bereaving him of his due comfort; ſo that it appears ſtill, that it is one of his deſigns to hinder the Comfort, and moleſt the Hearts of God's Children.

Rev. 12. 10.

Πλεονεκτηθῶμεν.

Piſcator in loc.

Calvin in loc.

Secondly, Of *ſuch concern* is *inward* ſpiritual Peace to us, that 'tis but an eaſie conjecture to conclude from thence, that ſo great an Adverſary will make it his deſign to rob us of ſuch a Jewel: For,

1. Spiritual Comfort is the *ſweet Fruit* of Holineſs, by which God *adorns* and beautifies the ways of Religious Service, to render

der them amiable and pleasant to the Undertakers, *Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace*, Prov. 3. 17. and this is the present *rest and refreshment* of God's faithful Servants under all their *toil*, that when they have *tribulation from the World*, yet they have *peace in him*, Joh. 16. 33. and that being *justified by Faith, they have peace with God*; and sometimes *joy unspeakable and full of glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. and this they may the more confidently expect, because *the fruits of the Spirit are Love, Joy, Peace*, &c. *Gal.* 5. 22.

2. Spiritual Comfort is not only our satisfaction, but our *inward Strength* and Activity, for all holy Services doth depend upon it. By this doth God strengthen our Heart, and gird up our Loyns *to run the ways of his Commandments*; it doth also strengthen the soul to undergo *Afflictions*, to glory in Tribulations, to triumph in Persecutions; the *outward Man* is also corroborated by the inward peace of the Mind; *A merry Heart doth good like a Medicine, but a broken Spirit drieth the Bones*, Prov. 17. 22. all which are intended by that expression, *Neh.* 8. 10. *The joy of the Lord is your strength*; 'tis strength to the *Body*, to the *Mind*, and that both for *service* and *suffering*; the reason whereof the Apostle doth hint to us, *Phil.* 4. 7. *The peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your Hearts and Minds*; that is, Peace doth so guard us as with *a Garison*, (for so much the word imports) that Φρουρήσει.
our Affections (*our Hearts*) being *entertained* with *divine satisfactions*, are not easily *enticed* by baser proffers of *worldly delights*, and our Reasonings (*our Minds*) being kept *steady* upon so *noble an object*, are not so easily *perverted* to a treacherous recommendation of vanities.

3. Joy and Peace are propounded to our careful endeavours, for Attainment and Preservation, as a necessary *duty* of great importance to us. Rejoycings are not only *recommended* as *seemly for the Upright*, but *injoined* as *Service*, and that in the *constant* practice, *Rejoyce evermore, In every thing give thanks*, 1 Thess. 5. 16, 18. *Rejoyce in the Lord alway; and again I say, rejoyce*, Phil. 4. 4. In the Old Testament God commanded the observation of several Feasts to the *Jews*, these though they had their several respective grounds from God's appointment, yet the general design of all seems to have been this, *that they might rejoyce before the Lord their God*, Lev. 23. 40. as if God did thereby tell them that it was the *comely complexion* of Religion, and that which was very *acceptable*

to himself, that his Children might always serve him in *chearfulness of Heart*, seeing such have *more cause* to rejoyce than all the World besides. They are then much mistaken, that think *mournful Eyes* and *sad Hearts* be the greatest *Ornaments* of Religion, or that none are *serious* in the Profession of it, that have a *chearful* Countenance and a *rejoycing* frame of Spirit. 'Tis true, there is a Joy that is *devilish*, and a Mirth which is *madness*, to which Christ hath denounced *a Wo, Wo be to them that laugh now, for they shall mourn and weep*; but this is a Joy of another nature, a *carnal* delight in *Vanity and Sin*, by which Men *fatten* their hearts to ruine; and whatsoever is said against this, can be no prejudice to Spiritual, holy Joy in *God*, his *Favour* and *Ways*.

4. Spiritual Comfort is also a *badg* of our Heavenly Father's kindness. As *Joseph* (the Son of his Fathers affections) had a special testimony thereof in his party-coloured Coat; so have Gods Favourites a peculiar token of his good Will to them, when he gives them *the Garments of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness*; if Spiritual Comfort be so advantagious to us, it will be no wonder to see Satan so much rage against it; it would be a satisfaction to him to tear these *Robes* off us, to impede so needful a *Duty*, to rob us of so much *Strength*, and to bereave us of the sweet *fruits* of our Labours.

Thirdly, It further appears that Satan's design is against the Comforts of God's Children, by the many *advantages* he hath against them, from the trouble and disquiet of their Hearts: I shall reckon up the chief of them; As,

1. From the Trouble of the Spirit, he raiseth *confusions and distractions* of Mind: For, 1. 'Tis as natural to Trouble, to raise up a swarm of *muddy Thoughts*, as to *a troubled Sea to cast up Mire and Dirt*: and hence is that comparison, *Isa.* 57.20. a thousand fearful Surmises, evil Cogitations, Resolves, and Counsels, immediatly offer themselves. This disorder of Thoughts Christ took notice of in his Disciples when they were in danger, *Why do thoughts arise in your hearts?* Luk. 24.38. And *David* considered it as matter of great anxiety, which called for speedy help, *Psal.* 94.19. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul.* Sometimes one fear is suggested, then presently another; now this doubt perplexeth, then another question is begot by the former; they think to take this course, then by and by they are off that, and resolve upon another, and

as

as quickly change again to a third, and ſo onward, one Thought ſucceeding another, as Vapours from a boyling Pot. 2. Such Thoughts are *vexatious* and diſtracting, the very Thoughts themſelves (being the poyſonous *ſteams* of their running Sores) are ſadly afflictive, and not unfitly called *Cogitationes onerosæ*, burdenſom Thoughts. But as they wrap up a Man in Clouds and Darkneſs, as they puzzle him in his Reſolves, *non-plus* him in his Undertakings, diſtract him in his Counſels, diſturb and hinder him in his Endeavours, *&c.* ſo do they bring the Mind into a labyrinth of confuſion. What advantage the Devil hath againſt a Child of God when his heart is thus divided and broken into Shivers, 'tis eaſie to imagine. And *David* ſeems to be very ſenſible of it, when he put up that requeſt, *Pſal.* 86. 11. *Unite my heart to fear thy Name.*

2. By diſquiet of Heart the Devil *unfits* Men *for Duty* or Service. Fitneſs for Duty lies in the *orderly temper* of *Body* and *Mind*, making a Man *willing* to undertake, and *able* to finiſh his work with *comfortable* ſatisfaction; if either the Body or Mind be diſtempered, a Man is unfit for ſuch an undertaking, both muſt be in a ſuitable frame, (like a *well-tun'd Inſtrument*) elſe there will be no melody: Hence, when *David* prepared himſelf for Praiſes and Worſhip, he tells us, his *Heart was ready* and *fixed*, and then *his Tongue* was *ready* alſo, ſo was his Hand with Pſaltery and Harp, all theſe were *awakened* into a ſuitable poſture. Pſal. 45. 1, 2. 108. 1, 2. That a Man is or hath been in a fit order for Service, may be concluded from, 1. His *Alacrity* to undertake a Duty. 2. His *Activity* in the proſecution. 3. His *Satisfaction* afterward, right *Grounds* and *Principles* in theſe things being ſtill *preſuppoſed*. This being laid as a foundation, we ſhall eaſily perceive how the troubles of the Spirit do unfit us for Duty: For,

1. Theſe do take away all *Alacrity* and forwardneſs of the Mind, partly by *diverting* it from Duty. Sorrows when they prevail, do ſo fix the Mind upon the preſent Trouble, that it can think of nothing but its Burthen, they *confine* the Thoughts to the *pain* and ſmart, and make a Man *forget* all other things; as *David* in his trouble *forget to eat his Bread*; and ſick Perſons willingly diſcourſe only of their Diſeaſes, partly by *indiſpoſing* for action. *Joy* and *Hope* are *active* Principles, but *Sorrow* is *ſullen* and ſluggiſh. As the Mind (in trouble) is wholly imployed in a *contemplation* of its *Miſery*, rather than in *finding out a way* to

avoid it, so if it be at leisure at any time to entertain thoughts of using means for recovery, yet 'tis so tired out with its Burden, so disheartned by its own Fears, so discouraged with Opposition and Disappointment, that it hath no *list* to undertake any thing; by this means the Devil brings the soul into a spiritual *Catoche*, so *congealing* the Spirits, that it is made stiff and deprived of motion.

2. Disquiets of Heart unfit us for Duty, by hindering our *activity* in prosecution of Duty. The *whole Heart*, Soul, and Strength should be *engaged* in all religious Services, but these Troubles are as Clogs and Weights to hinder motion. Joy is the *dilatation* of the Soul, and widens it for any thing which it undertakes; but Grief *contracts* the Heart, and narrows all the faculties: hence doth *David* beg an *enlarged heart*, as the principle of Activity, *Psal.* 119. 32. *I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my Heart:* for what can else be expected, when the Mind is so distracted with Fear and Sorrow, but that it should be uneven, tottering, weak, and confused? so that if it do set it self to any thing, it acts *troublesomly*, drives on heavily, and doth *very little* with a *great deal ado*; and yet were the unfitness the less, if that *little* which it can do, were *well* done, but the Mind is so *interrupted* in its endeavours, that sometimes in Prayer the Man begins, and then is presently at a stand, and dare not proceed, his words are *swallowed up*, *he is so troubled that he cannot speak*, Psal. 77. 4. Sometimes the Mind is kept so imployed and fixed on Trouble that it cannot attend in Hearing or Praying, but presently the Thoughts are called off, and become wandring.

3. Troubles hinder our *satisfaction* in Duty, and by that means unfit us to *present* Duties, and indispose us to *future* Services of of that kind. Our satisfaction in Duty ariseth, 1. Sometimes from *its own lustre* and sweetness, the conviction we have of its *pleasantness* and the spiritual advantages to be had thereby; these render it alluring and *attractive*, and by such considerations are we invited to their performance, as *Isa.* 2. 3. *Come ye let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, —— and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.* Hos. 6. 1. *Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us: he hath smitten, and he will bind us up*; but trouble of Spirit draws a black Curtain over the excellencies of Duty, and presents us with frightful

thoughts about it, ſo that we judg of it according to our fears, and make it frightful to our ſelves, as if it would be to no purpoſe, rather a miſchief than an advantage. 2. Sometime our ſatisfaction ariſeth from ſome *ſpecial token of Favour* which our indulgent Father lets fall upon us, while we are in his work. As when he gives us more than ordinary *aſſiſtance*, or puts *Joy* and *Comfort* into our Hearts. And this he often doth to make us come again, and to engage *afreſh* in the ſame, or other ſervices, as having *taſted and ſeen that the Lord is gracious*, and that there is a bleſſedneſs in waiting for him. As in our Bodies he ſo orders it, that the *concocted juices* become a *ſucceſſive Ferment* to thoſe that ſucceed from our daily Meat and Drink: So from Duties performed, doth he beget and continue Spiritual *Appetite* to *new* undertakings. But O how ſadly is all this hindered by the diſquiet of the Heart? The Graces, of Faith and Love, are uſually obſtructed, if not in their *Exerciſe* yet in their delightful *Fruits*, and if God offer a kindneſs, inward ſorrow hinders the *perception*: As when *Moſes* told the *Iſraelites* of their deliverance, *they hearkned not for hard bondage.* If a meſſage of Peace preſent it ſelf in a Promiſe, or ſome conſideration of Gods merciful diſpoſition, yet uſually this is not credited. *Job* confeſſeth ſo much of himſelf, Job 19.16. *If I had called and he had anſwered me, yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto my Voice. David* alſo doth the like, Pſal. 77.2, 3. *My Soul refuſeth to be comforted: I remember God, and was troubled.* Matter of greateſt comfort is often ſo far from giving eaſe, that it augments the trouble. However the Heart is ſo hurried with its fears, and diſcompoſed with grief, that it cannot hearken to nor conſider, nor believe any kind offer made to it.

By all theſe ways doth the Devil, through the diſquiet of Mind, unfit the Lord's People for Duty; and what a ſad advantage this is againſt us cannot eaſily be told. By this means he may *widen* the diſtance betwixt God and us, keep our Wounds *open*, make us a *reproach* to Religion: And what not? But

3. By theſe diſquiets he puſheth us on to *reject all duties*, for when he hath tyred us out by weariſom endeavours, under ſo great indiſpoſitions and unfitneſs, he hath a fair advantage to tempt us to lay all aſide. Our preſent poſture doth furniſh him with arguments, he forgeth his *Javelings* upon our *Anvil*, and they are commonly theſe *three*: 1. That duties are *difficult*. And this is eaſily proved from our own experience, while we are broken or bowed

bowed down with sorrows: we make many attempts for duty, and are oft beat off with loss: our greatest *toil* helps us but to very *inconsiderable* performances, hence he infers, *'Tis foolishness to attempt that which is above our strength, better sit still then toil for nothing.* 2. That they are *unfruitful*, and this is our own complaint, for troubled Spirits have commonly *great expectations* from duties *at first*, and they run to them (as the impotent and sick people, to the Pool of *Bethesda*) with thoughts of *immediate* ease as soon as they shall step into them; but when they have tryed, and waited a while, stretching themselves upon duty (as *Elisha*'s Servant laid the Staff upon the Face of the *Shunamites* Son) and yet there is *no voice* nor hearing, no answer from God, no peace, then are they presently disatisfied, reflecting on the Promises of God, and the Counsels of good Men, with this, *Where is all the pleasantness you speak of? what advantage is it that we have thus run, and laboured, when we have got nothing?* and then 'tis easy for the Devil to add, *And why do you wait on the Lord any longer?* 3. His last and most dangerous argument is, that they are *sinful*. Unfitness for Duty produceth many distractions, much deadness, wandering thoughts, great interruptions, and pittiful performances. Hence the troubled Soul comes off from duty, *wounded* and *halting*, more distressed when he hath done, than when he began: upon these considerations, that all his service was *sin*, *a mocking of God*, *a taking his name in vain*, nay a very *blasphemous affront* to a divine Majesty. Upon this the Devil starts the question to his Heart, *whether it be not better to forbear all Duty, and to do nothing?* Thus doth Satan improve the trouble of the mind, and often with the designed success. For a dejected Spirit doth not only afford the *materials* of these Weapons which the Devil frames against it, but is much prepared to *receive* them into its own Bowels. The *grounds* of these Arguments it *grants* and the *inferences* are commonly *consented* to, so that ordinarily duty is neglected, either, 1. Through *sottishness* of Heart, or 2. Through *frightful* fears: Or 3. Through *desperateness*: bringing a Man to the very precipice of that *Atheistical* determination, *I have cleansed my hands in vain.*

4. Satan makes use of the troubles of Gods Children as a *stumbling-block to others*. 'Tis no small advantage to him, that he hath hereby an occasion to render the ways of God *unlovely* to those that are beginning to look Heaven-ward, he sets before them, the Sighs, Groans, Complaints, and restless Out-cries of the wounded

ed in Spirit, to scare them off from all seriousness in Religion, and whispers this to them; *Will you chuse a Life of Bitterness and Sorrow? can you eat Ashes for Bread, and mingle your Drink with Tears? will you exchange the comforts and contents of Life, for a melancholly Heart, and a dejected countenance? how like you to go Mourning all the day, and at night to be scared with Dreams and terrified with Visions? will you chuse a Life that is worse than Death? and a condition which will make you a terrour to your selves, and a burthen to others? can you be in love with an heart loaden with grief, and perpetual fears almost to distraction? while you see others in the mean time enjoy themselves in a contented peace?* Thus he follows young beginners with his suggestions, making them believe that they cannot be serious in Religion, but at last they will be brought to this, and that 'tis a very dangerous thing to be religious overmuch, and the high way to dispair: So that if they must have a Religion, he readily directs them to use no more of it, than may consist with the pleasures of Sin and the World, and to make an easy business of it, not to let Sin lye over-near their Heart, lest it disquiet them, nor over-much to concern themselves with Study, Reading, Prayer, or hearing of threatning awakening Sermons, lest it make them *Mad*, nor to affect the sublimities of Communion with God, exercises of Faith and Divine Love, lest it *discompose* them, and dash their worldly Jollities *out of Countenance*. A Counsel that is readily enough embraced by those that are almost perswaded to be Christians; and the more to confirm them in it, he sticks not sometime to asperse the poor troubled Soul with *Dissimulation* (where that accusation is proper, for the Devil cares not how inconsistent he be to himself, so that he may but gain his end) affirming all his seriousness to be nothing but *whining Hypocrisy*. So that whether they judg these troubles to be real or feigned, his conclusion is the same, and he perswades Men thereby to hold off from all religious strictness, holy diligence, and careful watchfulness.

5. A further use which the Devil makes of these troubles of Spirit, is to *prepare* the Hearts of Men thereby, to give entertainment to his *venomous impressions*. Distress of Heart usually opens the Door to Satan, and lays a Man naked, without Armour or Defence as a fair Mark for all his poysoned Arrows, and 'tis a hundred to one but some of them do hit. I shall chuse out some of the most remarkable, and they are these:

1. After

Est quædam etiam dolendi voluptas.

1. After long *acquaintance* with grief he labours to *fix* them in it. In some cases custome doth *alleviate* higher griefs, and Men take an *odd kind of delight in them*, 'tis some pleasure to complain, and Men settle themselves in such a course, their Finger is ever upon their Soar, and they go about telling their Sorrows to all they converse with, though to some this is a necessity, (for real Sorrows if they be not *too great* for vent, will constrain them to speak,) yet in some that have been formerly acquainted with grief, it degenerates at last into a *formality* of complaining; and because they formerly had cause so to do, they think they must always do so. But besides this, Satan doth endeavour to *chain* Men to their mourning upon *two* higher Accounts, 1. By a *delusive contentment* in sorrow, as if our tears *paid* some part of *our debt* to God, and made *amends* for the injuries done to him. 2. By an *obstinate sullenness* and desperate resolvedness, they *harden themselves in sorrow*, and say as *Job* 7. 11. *I will not refrain my Mouth, I will speak in the anguish of my Spirit, I will complain in the bitterness of my Soul. Am I a Sea, or a Whale, that thou settest a Watch over me?*

Collius Cordial *Part* 2. *p.* 154.

2. Another impression that Mens Hearts are apt to take, is *unthankfulness*, for the favours *formerly* bestowed upon them; their *present* troubles blot out the memory of *old* kindnesses; they conclude they have nothing at all, because they have not peace; though God heretofore hath sent down from on high, and taken them out of the great Waters, or out of the Mire and Clay where they were ready to sink; though he hath sent them many tokens of Love, conferred on them many Blessings: yet all these are no more to them, so long as their sorrows continue, than *Haman's* Wealth and Honour was to him, so long as *Mordecai* the Jew sate at the Kings Gate. Thus the Devil oft prevails with God's Children, to deal with God, as some unthankful Persons deal with their Benefactors; who if they be not humour'd in every request, deny the reality of their Love, and dispise with great ingratitude all that was done for them before.

3. By inward griefs, the Heart of the afflicted are prepared to entertain the *worst interpretation* that the Devil can put upon the *Providences* of God. The various *Instances* of Scripture, and the gracious *Promises* made to those that *walk in Darkness and see no Light*, do abundantly forewarn Men from making *bad* conclusions of God's dealings, and do tell us that God in design, for our *tryal*, and for our *profit* doth often hide his Face *for a moment*, when yet

yet his purpose is to *bind us up with everlasting compassions.* Now the Devil labours to improve the sorrows of the Mind to give a quite contrary construction: if they are afflicted, instead of saying, *Sorrow may endure for a Night, but Joy will come in the Morning,* or that *for a little while God hath hidden himself,* he puts them to say, *this Darkness shall never pass away.* If the grief be little, he drives them on to a fearful expectation of worse; as he did with *Hezekiah, Esa.* 38.13. *I reckoned till Morning, that as a Lyon, so will he break all my Bones, from Day even to Night wilt thou make an end of me.* If God purpose to teach us by inward Sorrows, our Pride of Heart, carelessness, neglect of dependance upon him, the bitterness of Sin, or the like: the Devil will make us believe (and we are too ready to subscribe to him) that God proclaims open War against us, and resolves never to own us more. So did *Job, chap.* 19. 6. *Know now that God hath overthrown me, and compassed me with his Net:* how often complained he, *thou hast made me as thy mark, thou hast broken me asunder, thou hast taken me by my Neck and shaken me to peices?* So also *Heman, Psal.* 88. 14. *Why castest thou off my Soul? why hidest thou thy Face from me?*

4. Upon this occasion the Devil is ready to envenome the Soul with *sinful wishes* and execrations against it self. Eminent Saints have been tempted in their trouble to say too much this way, *Job* solemnly cursed his Day; *Job* 3. 3. *Let the Day perish wherein I was born, and the Night in which it was said, there is a Manchild conceived,* &c. So also *Jeremiah,* chap. 20. 14. *Cursed be the Day wherein I was Born, let not the Day wherein my Mother bare me, be Blessed; Cursed be the Man who brought tydings to my Father, saying a Manchild is Born unto thee; and let that Man be as the Cities which God overthrew, and repented not.* Strange rashness! what had the Day deserved? or wherein was the Messenger to be blamed? Violent Passions hurried him beyond all bounds of reason and moderation. When troubles within are violent, a small push sets Men forward; and when once they begin, they are *carried headlong* beyond what they *first* intended.

5. On this advantage the Devil sometimes imboldens them to *quarrel* God himself *directly.* When *Job* and *Jeremiah* cursed their day, it was a contumely against God *indirectly,* but they durst not make bold with God at so high a rate as to quarrel him to his Face.

Yet even this are Men brought to often, when their sorrows are *long-lasting* and *deep*. The Devil suggests, *Can God be faithful, and never keep Promise for help? can he be merciful when he turns away his ears from the cry of the miserable? where is his pity when he multiplies his wounds without cause?* Though at first these cursed intimations do a little *startle* Men, yet when by frequent *inculcating* they grow more *familiar* to the Heart, the distressed break out *in their rage*, with those exclamations, *Where is the faithfulness of God? where are his Promises? hath he not forgotten to be gracious? are not his Mercies clean gone?* And at last it may be Satan leads them a step higher, that is,

6. To a *despairing desperateness*. For when all Passages of relief are stopt up, and the burthen becomes great, Men are apt to be drawn into *rage and fury*, when they think their burthen is *greater than they can bear*, and see no *hope of ease*, in a kind of *revenge* they express their anger against the hand that wounded them. The Devil is officiously ready with his advice of *Curse God and die*, and they being *full of anguish*, are quickly made to comply with it.

7. When 'tis at this height, the Devil hath but one Stage more, and that is the suggesting of *irregular means* for ease. Rage against God doth not quench the inward burning; Blasphemies against Heaven easeth not the Pain, the Soar runs still and ceaseth not, the trouble continues, the Man cannot endure it longer, all Patience and Hope is gone, what shall he do in this case? The Devil offers his Service, he will be the *Physician*, and commonly he prescribes one of these *two* things: 1. That 'tis best to endeavour to break through all this trouble into a *resolved prophaneness*; not to stand in awe of Laws, nor to believe that there is a God that governs in the Earth, but that this is only the bitter fruit of *melancholy*, and unnecessary seriousness, and therefore 'tis best; *to eat, drink and be merry*. If a Man can thus escape out of his trouble, the Devil needs no more; but oft he cannot, the wounds of Conscience will not be thus healed. Then, 2. He hath another remedy which will not fail, as he tells them, that is, to *destroy themselves*, to end their troubles with their lives. How open are the Breasts of troubled Creatures to all these Darts? and were it not that God *secretly* steps in, and *holds* the afflicted *with his right hand*, 'tis scarce imaginable but that wounded Consciences should by Satan's

tan's ſubtile improvement of ſo fair an advantage, be brought to all this miſery.

8. Satan can afflict the *Body*, by *the Mind*. For theſe two are ſo cloſely bound together, that their good and bad eſtate is ſhared betwixt them. If the Heart be merry, the Countenance is chearful, the Strength is renewed, the Bones do flouriſh like an Herb. If the Heart be troubled, the Health is impaired, the Strength is dryed up, the Marrow of the Bones waſted, *&c.* Grief in the Heart, is like a *Moth* in the Garment, it inſenſibly conſumeth the Body, and diſordereth it. This advantage of weakening the Body falls into Satans hands by neceſſary conſequence, as the Prophets ripe Figs, that fell into the Mouth of the Eater. And ſurely he is well pleaſed with it, as he is an Enemy both to Body and Soul: But 'tis a greater ſatisfaction to him, in that as he can make the Sorrows of the Mind, produce the Weakneſs and Sickneſs of the Body: So can he make the *Diſtemper* of the Body (by a *reciprocal requital*) to augment the *trouble* of the Mind. How little can a ſickly Body do? it diſables a Man for all Services, he cannot oft Pray, nor Read, nor Hear. Sickneſs takes away the Sweetneſs and Comfort of Religious Exerciſes; this gives occaſion for them to think the worſe of themſelves; they think the *Soul is weary* of the ways of God, when the Body cannot hold out. All failures which *wearineſs* and faintneſs produce, are aſcribed preſently to the *bad diſpoſition* of the Mind, and this is like Oyl caſt upon the Flame. Thus the Devil makes a double gain out of Spiritual trouble.

9. Let it be alſo reckoned among the advantages which Satan hath againſt Men from trouble of Spirit, that 'tis a *contentment* to him to ſee them in their Miſeries; 'tis a *ſport* to him to ſee them (as *Job* ſpeaks) take their Fleſh in their Teeth, and cry out in the bitterneſs of their Souls; their groanings are his Muſick: when they wallow in Aſhes, drown themſelves in Tears, roar till their Throat is dry, ſpread out their Hands for help, then he *gluts* his Heart in looking upon their woes. When they fall upon God with their unjuſt Surmiſes, evil Interpretations of Providence, queſtioning his Favour, denying his Grace, wiſhing they had never been Born, then he *claps* his Hands and ſhouts *a Victory*. The pleaſanteſt ſight to him, is to ſee *God hiding* himſelf from his Child, and that Child *broken* with fears, *torn* in peices with griefs, made a *Brother to Dragons*, a *Companion* to *Owls*, under *reſtleſs*

Anxities, perpetual *Lamentations*, *feeble* and sore broken, their Strength *dryed* like a Potsheard, their *Throat* dry, their *Tongue* cleaving to their Jaws, their *Bowels boyling*, their *Bones* burnt with Heat, their *Skin black* upon them, their *Flesh* consumed, their *Bones* sticking out, *chastened* with *strong* pain upon their Bed. This is one of Satan's delightful Spectacles, and for these ends doth he all he can, to bereave them of their Comfort, which we may the more certainly perswade our selves to be true, when we consider the grounds forementioned, his *malicious nature*, the *advantages* of Spiritual Peace, and the *disadvantages* of Spiritual trouble.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the various Ways by which he hinders ***Peace.*** *1. Way by discomposures of Spirit. These Discomposures explained, by shewing, 1. What advantage he takes from our natural Temper; and what Tempers give him this advantage. 2. By what occasions he works upon our natural Tempers. 3. With what success. (1.) These Occasions suited to natural Inclinations, raise great disturbance. (2.) They have a tendency to Spiritual Trouble. The thing proved, and the manner how, discovered. (3.) These Disturbances much in his Power. General and Particular Considerations about that Power.*

HAving evidenced that one of Satan's principal designs is against the Peace and Comfort of God's Children; I shall next endeavour a discovery of the *various ways* by which he doth undermine them herein. All inward troubles are not of the same *kind* in themselves, neither doth Satan always produce the same *effects* out of all. Some being in their own nature *disquiets*, that do not so *directly*, and immediately overthrow the Peace and Joy of believing, and the Comforts of assurance of Divine Favour, as others do. Yet seeing that by all, he hath no small advantage against us, as to *Sin* and *Trouble*, and that any of them at the *long-run*, may lead us to *question* our interest in Grace, and the Love of God, and may accordingly afflict us, I shall speak of them all; which that I may do the more distinctly, I shall rank these troubles into several *heads*, under *peculiar names*, (it may be not altogether so proper, but that the curious may find matter of exception to them) that by them and their explanation, the differences may the better appear. I distinguish therefore of a *fourfold* trouble, that the Devil doth endeavour to work up upon the Hearts

Hearts of Men. They are, 1. *Discomposures*. 2. *Affrightments*. 3. *Dejections of Sadness*. 4. *Distresses* of Horrour. Of all which I shall speak in their order. And

1. Of *Discomposures* of Soul. These are *Molestations* and Disturbances by which the Mind is put *out of order* and made unquiet; the calm (in which it should enjoy it self, and by which it should be composed to a regular and steady acting) being disturbed by a *Storm of Commotion*, and in which the *Conscience* or the peace of it is not *presently* concerned. This distinction of the trouble of *Soul* from the trouble of *Conscience* is not new, others have observed it before, and do thus explain it, Trouble of Soul is *larger* than trouble of Conscience; every *troubled Conscience* is a *troubled Soul*, but every troubled Soul is not a troubled Conscience: for the Soul may be troubled from Causes *Natural*, *Civil*, and *Spiritual*, according to *variety* of Occasions and Provocations, when yet a Man's *inward peace* with God is firm; and in some cases (as in Infants and in Men distracted with Feavers, &c.) there may be passions and disturbances of Soul, when the Conscience is *not capable* of exercising its office; nay the *Soul of Christ* was troubled (*Joh.* 12. 27. *Now is my Soul troubled*) when it was not possible that *Sin* or *Despair* should have the least footing in him.

Dickson Therap. Sacr. l. 1. c. 2. Differunt inter se casus animæ ægræ & casus conscientiæ ægræ, *&c.*

For the opening of these discomposures of Soul, I shall, 1. Shew upon what advantage of *Natural Temper* the Devil is encouraged to molest Men. 2. By what *occasions* he doth work upon our *Natural Inclinations*. 3. And with what *success* of disturbance to the Soul.

1. As to our *Natural Dispositions*, Satan (as hath formerly been noted) takes his usual *indications* of working from thence; these guide him in his enterprises; his Temptations being suited to Mens Tempers, proceed more smoothly and successfully. Some are of so serene and calm a disposition, that he doth not much design their discomposure; but others there are, whose Passions are more stirring, (fit matter for him to work upon:) and these are,

1. The *angry* Disposition. How great an advantage this gives to Satan to disturb the Heart, may be easily conceiv'd, by considering the various workings of it in several Men, according to their different Humors; 'tis a Passion that acts not alike in all, and for the differences (so far as we need to be concerned,) I shall not trouble the Schools of Philosophers, but content my

self

ſelf with what we have in Eph. 4. 31. where the Apoſtle ex-preſſeth it by *three* words, [illegible] they differ eſſentially) declaring thereby the various *ways* of Angers working ; the firſt is Πικρία, which we tranſlate *Bitterneſs*. This is a diſpleaſure *ſmothered* : for ſome when they are angry cover it, and give it no vent, partly for that they are ſometimes aſhamed to mention the ground as trivial or unjuſt, partly from ſullenneſs of diſpoſition, and oft from a natural reſervedneſs : while the flame is thus kept down, it burns inwardly, and Men reſolve in their Minds many troubleſome vexatious thoughts. The ſecond word is Θυμὸς, *Wrath*: this is a fierce impetuous anger. Some are ſoon moved, but ſo violent, that they are preſently tranſported into Rage and Frenzy, or are ſo peeviſhly waſpiſh that they cannot be ſpoken to. The third is Ὀργὴ, tranſlated here *Anger*, but ſignifies ſuch a diſpleaſure as is deep, entertaining thoughts of *Revenge* and Purſuit, ſetling it ſelf at laſt into hatred. Any of theſe is enough to bereave the heart of its reſt, and to alarm it with diſturbances. *Bains* in loc.

2. Others have an *envious* Nature, always maligning and repining at other Mens felicity ; an evil Eye, that cannot look on anothers better condition without vexation. This turns a Man into a Devil, 'tis the Devil's proper ſin, and the fury that doth unquiet him, and he the better knows of what avail it would be to help on our trouble.

3. Some are of *proud* Tempers, always overvaluing themſelves with the ſcorn and contempt of others. This humor is troubleſom to all about them, but all this trouble doth at laſt redound to themſelves ; theſe think all others ſhould obſerve them, and take notice of their ſuppoſed excellencies, which if Men do not, then it pines them, or ſtirs up their Choler to Indignation. *Solomon*, Prov. 30. 21. mentioning thoſe things that are greatly diſquieting in the Earth, inſtanceth in *a Servant when he reigneth, and the Hand-maid that is Heir to her Miſtris*, intending thereby the proud imperious inſolency of thoſe that are unexpectedly raiſed from a low eſtate to Wealth or Honour : He that is of *a proud Heart ſtirreth up Strife*, Prov. 28. 25. and as he is troubleſome to others, ſo doth he create trouble to himſelf ; for he not only moleſts himſelf by the working of his diſdainful thoughts, while he exerciſeth his ſcorn towards others, (*Prov.* 21. 24. *The haughty Scorner deals in proud wrath*) but this occaſions the af-

fronts

fronts and contempt of others again, which beget new griefs to his restless Mind.

4. Some have a Natural *exorbitancy of Desire*, an evil coveting; they are passionately carried forth toward what they have not, and have no contentment or satisfaction in what they do enjoy. Such Humors are seldom at ease, their desires are *painfully* violent, and when they obtain what they longed for, they soon grow weary of it, and then another object takes up their wishes, so that these *Daughters of the Horsleech are ever crying, Give, give*, Prov. 30. 15.

5. Others have a *soft effeminate* Temper, a weakness of Soul that makes them unfit to bear any burthen, or endure any hardness. These if they meet with Pains or Troubles, (and who can challenge an exemption from them?) they are presently impatient, vexing themselves by a *vain reluctancy* to what they cannot avoid; not but that extraordinary Burthens will make the strongest Spirit to stoop, but these cry out for the smal'est matters, which a stout Mind would bear with some competent chearfulness.

6. And there are other Dispositions that are *tender*, to an *excess of Sympathy*, so that they immoderatly affect and afflict themselves with other Mens sorrows. Though this be a temper more commendable than any of the former, yet Satan can take advantage of this, as also of the forenamed Dispositions, to discompose us, especially by suiting them with fit occasions which readily work upon these Tempers: And this was

2. The second thing to be explained, which shall be performed by a brief enumeration of them, the chief whereof are these,

1. *Contempt* or Disestimation. When a Man's Person, Parts, or Opinion are slighted, his Anger, Envy, Pride and Impatience are awakened, and these make him swell and restless within. Even good Men have been sadly disturbed this way. *Job*, as holy a Man as he was, and who had enough of greater matters to trouble his Mind, yet among other griefs, complains of this more than once, *Job* 12. 4. *I am as one mocked of his Neighbour: the just upright Man is laughed to scorn.* Job 19. 15. *They that dwell in mine House, and my Maids count me for a Stranger. —— I called my Servant, and he gave me no answer; —— Yea, young Children despised me, I rose up and they spake against me.* Thus he bemoans himself, and (which is more) speaks of it again with some *smartness* of indignation, *Job* 30. 1. *Now they that are younger*

than

than I, have me in derision, whose Fathers I would have disdained to have set with the Dogs of my Flock. David also who had a stout heart under troubles, complains that he could not bear reproaches, *Psal. 69. Reproach hath broken mine Heart, I am full of heaviness.* What these reproaches were, and how he was staggered with them, he tells us, *Vers. 10. I chastned my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach. I made Sackcloth my Garment, and I became a Proverb to them. They that sit in the Gate, speak against me; and I was the Song of the Drunkards.* With these he was so stounded, that if he had not catch'd hold on God by Prayer, (as he speaks, *ver. 13.*) he had faln; *But as for me, my Prayer is unto thee, O Lord,* &c. and he afterward speaks of his support under Reproaches, as a wonder of Divine assistance, *Psal. 119. 51. The Proud have had me in derision, yet have I not declined from thy Law.*

2. *Injury* is another occasion by which the Devil works upon our Tempers to disquiet us. Wrongs of Injustice and Oppression are hard to bear, this is a common ground of trouble, good Men cannot always acquit themselves in this case as they ought. *Jeremiah* when smitten by *Pashur*, and put in the Stocks, *Jer. 20. 2, 7.* falls into a sad passion, *I am a derision daily, every one mocketh me, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil,* imitating the passionate affrightments of those that cry, Murther, Murther, *&c.* No wonder seeing *Solomon* gives it as an *axiom* built upon manifold experience, *Eccl. 7. 7. Oppression* doth not only make a Man unquiet, but *Mad* in his unquietness; and not only those that are foolish and hasty, but the most considerate and sedate Persons; *Oppression makes a wise Man mad.*

3. Another occasion of Mens discomposure, is the *prosperity of the Wicked:* their abundance, their advancements to Honours and Dignity hath always been a grudge to those whose condition is below them, and yet suppose themselves to have better grounds to expect preferment than they. This astonished *Job* even to trembling, *Job 21. 7. When I remember, I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh,* and the matter was but this; *Wherefore do the Wicked live, become old, yea, and mighty in power?* &c. The trouble that seizeth on Mens hearts on this occasion, is called *fretting*, a vexation that wears out the strength of the Soul, as two *hard* Bodies waste by *mutual attrition* or rubbing. And it takes its advantage from our envy chiefly, though other distempers come in to help it forward, *Psal. 37. 1. Fret not thy self because of evil Doers,*

neither be thou envious against the workers of Iniquity. *David* confesseth, that he was apt to fall into this trouble, *Psal.* 73. 3. *I was envious at the Foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the Wicked.* Against this disquiet we have frequent cautions, *Prov.* 24. 1, 19. and *Psal.* 49. 16. *Be not afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased.* All which shew our proneness to this disease.

4. *Crosses* and Afflictions give Satan an opportunity to work upon our Passions. As disappointments of Expectations, loss of Friends, of Estate, Persecutions and Sufferings for Conscience sake, &c. none of these in their own nature *are joyous, but grievous*: and what use they have been of to the Devil to discompose the minds of the Sufferers, is evidenced by common experience. The Tears, sad Countenances, and doleful Lamentations of Men are true Witnesses of the disquiet of their hearts; every one being pressed with the sense of his own smart, is ready to cry out, *Is there any sorrow like my sorrow? I am poor, and comfortless, my Lovers and my Friends have forsaken me, and there is none to help.* Some grow faint under their Burthen, while their Eyes fail in looking for redress, especially when new unexpected troubles overwhelm their hopes, *When I looked for good, then evil came; and when I waited for light, there came darkness,* Job 30. 26. *Why hast thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? We looked for peace, and there is no good; and for the time of healing, and behold trouble,* Jer. 14. 19. and here they sink, concluding there is no hope. Others that bear up better in a blessed expectation of spiritual profit, having that of *David* in their Eye, *Blessed is the Man whom thou afflictest, and teachest in thy Law:* yet they cannot forbear their complaints even to God, *Psal.* 25. 17. *The troubles of mine heart are enlarged, O bring thou me out of my distresses, look upon mine affliction and my pain.* May those that have had the highest advantages of heavenly support, whose hearts have been kept in peace, counting it all joy that they have fallen into these trials, (and God doth more this way, for those that suffer for the Gospels sake, than ordinarily for others) yet have not these been under a *Stoical senslessness* of their trouble; though they were *not distressed, they were troubled on every side,* though *not in despair,* yet they were *perplexed,* 2 *Cor.* 4. 8. though their Afflictions were *light*, yet were they *Afflictions* still.

5. To these may be added the *pain* or anguish of *Sickness*, and bodily Distemper. Though there are various degrees of pain, and

that some Sicknesses are less afflictive than others, yet none of them forbear to pierce the Mind. The whole Man is discomposed; he that is exercised *with strong pains upon his Bed*, cryes out in the bitterness of his Soul, and he that by *insensible* degrees languisheth, grows ordinarily *peevish*, and his mind bleeds by an inward wound, so that he *spends his days in sighing*, and his years in mourning. And others there are, who being before acquainted with bodily pains, grow very impatient in Sickness, and are able to bear nothing: and besides the present sence of pain, the expectation of Death puts some into great commotion, the fears of it, (for it is naturally dreadful) fills them with disquiet thoughts, and those that approach to the Grave, by slow steps, under Consumption or languishing Sicknesses, they are habituated to sadness, and can think of nothing *chearfully*, (except they have great assurance of Salvation, and have well learned to dye) because the Coffin, Grave, and Winding-sheet are still presented to them: these though they be very suitable Objects for Meditation, and (well improved) of great advantage for preparation to Death, yet doth Satan thereby (when it is for his purpose) endeavour to keep Men under grief, and to bereave them of their Peace.

6. Satan takes an advantage of trouble, from the *Miseries* of others. Sympathy is a Christian Grace; and to bear one anothers Burthens, to mourn with those that mourn, shews us to be *fellow-feeling Members of the same Body*, for *if one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it.* Yet are some Men naturally of so tender a Constitution, that Satan overdrives them herein, every common occasion will wound them: the usual effects of God's ordinary Providence on the Poor, Lame, or Sick, are deeply laid to Heart by them; and instead of being not *unsensible* of other Mens Miseries, they are *not sensible* of any thing else, neither do they enjoy their own Mercies. And here, as Satan can every moment, present them with objects of pitty, ordinary or extraordinary: so upon a religious pretence of merciful consideration, they are made cruel to themselves, refusing their *own peace*, because *other* Men are not at *ease*.

3. The third particular, promised to be explained for the discovery of these discomposures of Soul, was this; That by a *concurrance* of these and such like *occasions*, to such *tempers*, the Hearts of Men are disturbed, and their inward peace broken. This I shall

evidence by these *three* things: 1. That these *occasions* meeting with such *dispositions*, do naturally raise great *disturbances* in their present working. 2. That they have a tendency to *further trouble.* 3. That Satan doth *design*, and hath it ordinarily in his power to *discompose* the Hearts of Men hereby.

1. That these occasions, meeting with such dispositions, do naturally raise great disturbances. This is evident from what hath been said already: for (1.) All these dispositions carry as much *Fire* in their own Bosomes, as is sufficient to burn up the standing Corn of any Man's peace. What is anger, but an *inward burning*, a restless confusion of the Spirits, sometime a Phrensy, a Distraction, a troubled Sea full of Rage, a wild Beast let loose? Envy, that is a *fretful* peevishness, a vexatious repining, needing no other Tormentors but its own *furies*, recoiling upon him that bred it, because it cannot wreak its spite upon its Objects. An envious Person is a *Self-murtherer* by the verdict of *Eliphaz*, Job 5. 2. *Wrath killeth the foolish Man, and envy slayeth the foolish one.* This is not barely to be understood of its *provoking* the Judge of all the Earth to send down its deserved destruction, but also (if not chiefly) of its own *corroding* temper, which by long continuance wasts the Strength, and consumes the Body. Pride is a *perpetual vexation*, creating its troubles from its own Fancy: irregular covetings, keep a Man still upon the Rack, they make a Man like the *Tantalus* of the Poets, they give a Man a *caninus Appetitus*, a strong Appetite with excessive greediness, and restless pursuit, and *constant dissatisfactions*, he is ever *gaping* and never *enjoying*. Impatience is a wearisome conflict with a burthen which it can neither *bear*, nor yet *shake off*; where all the Fruit of the vain labour amounts to no berter account than this, that the Impatient makes his burthen the *greater*, the bands that tye it on the *stronger*, and the Strength that should bear it the *weaker*. Lastly, an excess of Pity, multiplies *wounds without cause*, it hinders a Man to be *happy*, so long as there are any that are *miserable*: he is always (in reference to his quiet) at the Mercy of other Men, the afflicted can torment him at a distance; and, by a kind of *Magick*, make him feel the torments that are inflicted upon his Image. Who can deny, but that Men that are ridden by such vexatious dispositions, must lead an unquiet Life, and always be tossed with inward Tempests. Especially (2) when we consider, *how fit* the forementioned *occasions* are, to draw out these *humours* to their tumultuary

multuary extravagancies: a lighted Match and Gun-Powder, are not more exactly ſuited to raiſe a ſhaking Blaſt, than thoſe occaſions and tempers are to breed an inward annoyance. Some of theſe humours are ſo troubleſome, that rather than they will want work, they will fight with their *own Shadows*, and by a perverſneſs of *prejudicated Fancy*, will create their own troubles, and the beſt of them, which ſeem ſometime to take truce, and compoſe themſelves to reſt, while occaſions are out of the way: yet they are *quickly awakened*, like ſleeping Dogs that are rouſed with the leaſt noiſe; what work then may we expect they will make when they are ſummoned to give their appearance upon a ſolemn occaſion? But (3) if we ſhould deal by inſtances, and bring upon the Stage the effects that have been brought forth by theſe concurring cauſes, it will appear that they make diſturbances in good earneſt: let us either view the *furious fits*, that have been like ſudden Flaſhes, ſooneſt gone; or their more *laſting impreſſions*, and we ſhall find it true. As to violent Fits, raiſed by ſuch occaſions and diſpoſitions, examples are infinite. What rages, outrages, Madneſſes, and extravagances have Men run into? Some upon provocations, have furiouſly acted *ſavage cruelties*, and for ſmall matters have been carried to the moſt deſperate revenges. Others have been brought to ſuch violent *commotions* within themſelves, that the frame of nature hath been thereby *weakened*, and overthrown. As *Scilla*, who in a ſtrong paſſion, vomited Choler till he dyed. Some in their fury, have acted that which hath been matter of *ſorrow* to them all their dayes. But (omitting the examples of Heathens and wicked Men) let us conſider the wonderful *tranſports* of holy Men. *Moſes* a Man eminent, beyond compariſon, in Meekneſs; was ſo aſtoniſhed with a ſudden ſurprize of trouble, at the Sight of the Golden Calf, that he threw down the Tables of the Law, and brake them. Some indeed obſerve from thence, a *ſignificancy* of *Iſraels* breaking the Law, and forfeiting God's Protection, as his peculiar People, but *this* is more to be aſcribed to the *deſignment* of *Divine Providence*, that ſo ordered it, than to the *intendment* of *Moſes*, who no doubt, did not this from a *ſedate* and calm *deliberation*, as purpoſing by this act to tell *Iſrael* ſo much; but was hurried by his grief (as not conſidering well what he did) to break them. *Aſa* a good Man, when he was reproved by the Prophet, (inſtead of thankful acceptance of the reproof) grows angry, falls into a rage, and throws

throws the Prophet into Prison. *Elias*, discomposed with *Jezebels* Persecution, desires that God would *take away his Life*. *Jonah*, in his anger, falls out with God, and *justifies* it when he hath done: surely such Fits as these proceeded from great inward combustion. Would Wise, Sober, holy Men have said or done such things, if they had not been transported *beyond* themselves? and though in such cases, the fits are soon over, yet we observe that some are apt to fall into such Fits *often*, and are so *easily* irritated, that (like the *epileptick* Person possessed by the Devil) upon every occasion, they are by him, *cast into the Fire or into the Water*, and by the *frequent return* of their Distemper are *never* at rest.

As to others, whose tempers are more apt to *retain* a troublesome Impression, 'tis very obvious that their discomposures have as much in *length* and *breadth*, as the other had in *height*. You may view *Haman* tormented under his secret discontent, which his Pride and Envy formed in him, for the want of *Mordicai*'s Obeysance: the Kings Favour, a great Estate, high Honour, and what else a Man could wish to make him content, are all swallowed up in this Gulph, and become nothing to him. You see *Amnon* vexed and sick, for his Sister *Tamer*, waxing lean from day to day. You see *Ahab* (though a King, who had enough to satisfie his Mind) in the same condition for *Naboth*'s Vineyard. If you say these were wicked Men, who rid their Lusts without a Bridle, and used the Spur: look then upon better Men, and you will see too much. *Rachel* so grieves and mourns for want of Children, that she professeth her Life inconsistent with her disappointment, *Give me Children, else I die*. *Hanna* upon the same occasion weeps and eats not, and prays in the bitterness of her Soul, and the abundance of her complaint and grief. *Jeremiah* (being pressed with discouragements from the contradiction of evil Men) calls himself *a Man of strife and contention to the whole Earth*, *Jer.* 15. 10. his sorrows thence arising, had so imbittered his Life, that he puts *a woe* upon his Birth, *Wo is me, my Mother, that thou hast born me a Man of Strife*. *Paul* had a noble courage under manifold afflictions, he could glory in the Cross, and rejoice in persecutions: nevertheless, the greatness of his work, the froward perversness and unsteadiness of Professors, (which put him under fears, jealousies, and new travel) the Miseries of Christians, and the care he had for the concerns of the Gospel, (which was a con-

2 Cor. 11. 2.
Gal. 4. 19.

conſtant load upon his Mind, his Heart (like old *Eli*'s) trembling ſtill for the Ark of God) made him complain as one worn out by the troubles of his Heart; 2 *Cor.* 11.27. *In wearineſs, and painfulneſs, in watchings often, in hunger and thirſt, in faſtings often, in cold and nakedneſs. Beſides thoſe things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak?* &c. For the *Jews* he had great heavineſs and continual ſorrow in his Heart; and for the *Gentiles* he had perpetual fears. Rom. 9. 2. Now though he had a great ſhare of divine Comforts intermixed, and a more than ordinary aſſiſtance of the Spirit, to keep him from ſinful diſcompoſure of Spirit (at leaſt to ſuch an height, as it ordinarily prevails upon others) yet was he very ſenſible of his burthen, and doubtleſs the Devil laboured to improve theſe occaſions to weary out his ſtrength. For by theſe, and ſuch like things, he frequently vexeth the righteous Souls of the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel from day to day: ſo that their hearts have no reſt, and their hands grow often feeble, and they cry out, O the burthen! O the care! being ready to ſay as *Jeremiah, chap.* 20.7. *O Lord, thou haſt decieved me, and I was decieved; I am a deriſion daily, every one mocketh me.* Thus ſay they, Did we ever think to meet with ſuch diſappointments ſuch Griefs, from the Wilfulneſs, Pride, Weakneſs, Ignorance, Pettiſhneſs, Inconſtancy, Negligence, and Scandals of Friends? and ſuch Hatred, Contradictions, Scorns, and Injuries from Enemies? Were we free, what Calling would we not rather chuſe? what place would we not rather go to, where we might ſpend the remainder of our dayes in ſome reſt and eaſe? Were it not better to work with our hands for a Morſel of Bread, for ſo might our Sleep be ſweet to us at Night, and we ſhould not ſee theſe ſorrows? At this rate are good Men ſometime diſturbed, and the anguiſh of their Spirit makes their Life a burthen.

2. Yet is not this all the diſturbance that the Devil works upon our hearts by theſe things, (though theſe are bad enough) but they have a tendency *to further trouble*. Diſcompoſures of Spirit, if they continue *long*, turn at laſt into *troubles of Conſcience*. Though there is no affinity betwixt ſimple diſcompoſure of Soul, and troubles of Conſcience in their own nature; the objects of the former being things *external*, no way relating to the Souls Intereſt in God and Salvation, which are the objects of the latter: yet the effects produced by the prevalency of theſe diſturbances, are a fit

Stock

Stock for the ingrafting of doubts and questionings about our Spiritual condition. As *Saul*'s Father first troubled himself for the loss of his Asses, and sent his Son to seek them; but when he stayed long, he forgat his trouble, and took up a new grief for his Son, whom he feared he had lost in pursuit of the Asses. So is it sometime with Men, who after they have long vexed themselves for injuries or afflictions, &c. upon a serious consideration of the working, and power of these Passions, leave their former pursuit, and begin to bethink themselves in what a condition their Souls are, that abound with so much Murmuring, Rage, Pride, or Impatience, and then the Scene is altered, and they begin to fear they have lost their Souls, and are now perplexed about their Spiritual estate. To make this plain I will give some *instances*, and then add some *reasons* which will evidence *that it is so*, and also *how* it comes to be so.

For Instances, though I might produce a sufficient number to this purpose, from those that have written of *Melancholy*, yet I shall only insist upon two or three from Scripture.

Hezekiah when God smote him with Sickness, at first was discomposed upon the apprehension of Death, that he should so soon be deprived of the *residue of his years, and behold Man no more with the inhabitants of the World*, as he himself expresseth it, *Esay* 38. 10. afterward his trouble grew greater, *He chattered as a Crane or Swallow, and mourned as a Dove*, he was in *great bitterness*, *ver.* 17. and sadly *oppressed* therewith, *ver.* 14. That which thus distressed him was not simply the fear of Death, we cannot imagine so pious a Person would so very much disquiet himself upon that single account; but by the expressions which he let fall in his complainings, we may understand, that some such thoughts as these did shake him, that he apprehended God was *angry* with him, that the present stroke signified *so much* to him, all circumstances considered, (for he was yet in his strength, and *Jerusalem* in great distress, being at that time besieged by *Sennacheribs* Army, and for him to be doomed to death by a *sudden* message, at *such* a time, seemed to carry much in it) and that surely there was great *provocation* on his part; and it seems upon search, he charged himself so deeply with his sinfulness, that his apprehensions were no less, than that if God should restore him, yet in the sence of his vileness he should never be able to look up; *I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my Soul*, *ver.* 15. (which expression implies

2 Kings 20. 6. Vid. *Lightfoot* Ham. in loc.

plies a ſuppoſition of his Recovery, and a deep ſenſe of Iniquity) and accordingly when he was recovered, he takes notice chiefly of Gods love to *his Soul*, and the *pardon* of his ſin, (which evidently diſcover where the trouble pinched him) *Thou haſt in love to my ſoul delivered it from the Pit of Corruption, for thou haſt caſt all my ſins behind thy back*, verſ. 17.

Job's Troubles were very great, and his caſe extraordinary: Satan had maliciouſly ſtript him of all outward Comforts, this he bore with admirable Patience, *Job* 1.21. *Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.* The Devil ſeeing now himſelf defeated, obtains a new Commiſſion, wherein *Job* is wholly put into his hand, (life only excepted, *chap.*2.9.) he ſets upon him again, and in his new encounter labours to bring upon him ſpiritual diſtreſſes, and accordingly improves his loſſes and ſufferings to that end, as appears by his endeavours and the ſucceſs; for as he tempted him *by his Wife* to a deſperate *diſregard* of God, that had ſo afflicted him, *Curſe God and die*, ſo he tempted him alſo by *his Friends*, to *queſtion* the ſtate of his Soul, and his Integrity, and all from the conſideration of his outward miſeries. To that purpoſe are all their diſcourſes. *Eliphaz Chap.* 4. 5, 6, 7. from his ſufferings and his carriage under them, takes occaſion to jear his former Piety, (as being no other than feigned) *It is come upon thee, and thou fainteſt: is not this thy fear, thy confidence, thy hope, and the uprightneſs of thy ways?* that is, is all thy Religion come to this? and alſo concludes him to be wicked, *Who ever periſhed being innocent? and where were the righteous cut off?* Bildad, *Chap.* 8. 6, 13. chargeth him with Hypocriſie upon the ſame ground, and while he makes his defence, *Zophar* plainly gives him the lye, *Chap.* 11. 3. and at this rate they go their round; and all this while Satan (whoſe deſign it was to afflict his Conſcience with the ſenſe of divine Wrath) *ſecretly* ſtrikes in with theſe Accuſations, inſomuch, that though *Job* ſtoutly defended his *Integrity*, yet he was wounded with inward *Diſtreſſes*, and concluded, that theſe dealings of God againſt him were no leſs than God's ſevere obſervance of his Iniquity; as is plain from his bemoaning himſelf in *Chap.* 10. 2. *I will ſay unto God, Do not condemn me; ſhew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.* Verſ. 16, 17. *Thou hunteſt me as a fierce Lion, thou reneweſt thy Witneſſes againſt me*, &c.

David was a Man that was often exercised with Sickness and Troubles from Enemies, and in all the instances almost that we meet with in the *Psalms*, of these his Afflictions, we may observe the outward occasions of Trouble brought him under the suspition of Gods Wrath, and his Iniquity; so that he was seldom sick, or persecuted; but this called on the disquiet of Conscience, and brought his sin to remembrance; as *Psal. 6.* (which was made on the occasion of his Sickness, as appears from *vers.* 5.) wherein he expresseth the *vexation* of his *Soul* under the appehension of Gods *Anger*; all his other griefs running into this Channel, (as little Brooks losing themselves in a great River) change their name and nature; he that was at first only concerned for his Sickness, is now wholly concerned with sorrow and smart under the fear and hazard of his Souls condition; the like we may see in *Psal.* 38. and many places more.

Having made good the assertion, That discomposures of Soul upon outward occasions, by long continuance and Satans management, do often run up to spiritual distress of Conscience: I shall next for further confirmation and illustration shew how it comes to be so.

1. Discomposures of Spirit do *obstruct*, and at last *extinguish* the inward *comforts* of the Soul: so that if we suppose the discomposed Person at first (before he be thus disordered) to have had a good measure of spiritual joy in Gods favour, and delight in his ways; yet the disturbances, 1. *Divert* his thoughts from *feeding* upon these Comforts, or from the *enjoyment* of himself in them. The Soul cannot naturally be highly intent upon two different things at once, but whatsoever doth strongly engage the Thoughts and Affections, that carries the whole Stream with it, be it good or bad, and other things give way at present. When the heart is *vehemently* moved on *outward* Considerations, it lays by the thoughts of its sweetness which it hath had in the enjoyment of God; they are so contrary and inconsistent, that either our Comforts will chase out of our Thoughts our Discomposures, or our Discomposures will chase away our Comforts. I believe the Comforts of *Elias* (when he lay down under his grief, and desired to die); and of *Jeremiah* (when he cried out of violence) run very low in those fits of Discontent, and their Spirits were far from an actual rejoycing in God; but this is not the worst, we may not so easily imagine that upon the going

away

away of the fit, the wonted Comforts return to their former course: For, 2. The Mind being *distracted* with its Burthen, is left *impotent* and unable to return to its former exercise; the warmth which the Heart had, being smothered and suspended in its excercise, is not so quickly revived, and the thoughts which were busied with disturbance (like the distempered humors of the Body) are not *reduced* suddainly to that evenness of composure as may make them fit for their *old* imployment. And 3. If God should *offer* the Influences of joyful support, a discomposed Spirit is not in a capacity to *receive* them, no more than it can receive those counsels that by any careful hand are interposed for its relief and settlement. Comforts are not heard in the midst of noise and clamour; the *calmness* of the Souls faculties are præsupposed as a necessary *qualification* towards its *reception* of a message of Peace. *Phineas* his Wife being overcome of grief for the Arks captivity and her Husbands death, could not be affected with the joyful news of a Son. But 4. Sinful discomposures *hinder* these gracious and comfortable *offers*, if we could possibly (which we cannot ordinarily) receive them, yet we cannot expect that God will give them. The Spirit of Consolation loves to take up his lodging in a *meek and quiet Spirit*, and nothing more grieves him than Bitterness, Wrath, Anger, Clamour, and Malice, which made the Apostle, *Eph.* 4. 30, 31. subjoyn his direction of *putting these away* from us, with his advice of *not grieving the Spirit by which we are sealed unto the day of Redemption.* And then 5. The *former stock* of Comfort, which Persons distempered with discomposures might be supposed to have, will soon be *wasted*, for our Comforts are not like the *Oil* in the Cruse, or *Meal* in the Barrel, which had (as it were) their *Spring* in themselves; we are comforted and supported by *daily communication* of Divine Aid, so that if the Spring head be stopped, the Stream will quickly grow dry. 'Tis evident then, that inward Consolations in God will not *ripen* under these *Shadows*, nor *grow* under these continual *droppings*, seeing a discomposed Spirit is not capable to *receive* more, nor able *to keep* what comfort it had at first; we may easily see how it comes to pass that these disturbances may in time bring on spiritual troubles: for if our Comforts be once lost, Trouble of Conscience easily follows. Where there is nothing to fortify the Heart, the poyson of malicious suggestions will unavoidably prevail.

2. Discomposures of Soul afford the Devil *fit matter* to work upon. They furnish him with strong objections against *sincerity of Holiness*, by which the peace of Conscience being strongly assaulted, is at last overthrown. The usual Weapons by which Satan fights against the assurance of Gods Children, are the *guilt* of sins committed, and the *neglect* of Duty, and the disturbed Soul affords enough of both these to make a Charge against it self: For,

1. Where there is much *Discomposure* there is much *Sin*. If in the multitude *of words* there wants not Iniquity, then much more in the multitude of *unruly thoughts*. A disturbed Spirit is like *troubled* Water, all the *Mud* that lay at the bottom is raised up and *mixeth* it self with the Thoughts: If any injury or loss do trouble the Mind, all the Thoughts are tinctured with Anger, Pride, Impatience, or whatsoever root of bitterness was in the Heart before; we view them not singly as the issues of wise *Providence*, but ordinarily we consider them as done by such *Instruments*, and against our *selves* as malicious, spiteful, causless, ingrateful wrongs, and then we give too great a liberty to our selves to rage, to meditate revenge, to threaten, to reproach, and what not? and if our Disposition have not so strong a natural inclination to these Distempers, yet the Thoughts by discomposure are quickly leavened (it is the comparison used by the Apostle, 1 *Cor*. 5. 8. to express the power of Malice, (which is an usual attendant in this service) to infect all the Imaginations) with a sharpness, which makes them swell into exorbitancy and excess; hence proceed Revilings, Quarrelings, *&c*. When the Tongue is thus *fermented*, it is *a Fire*, *a World of Iniquity*, (producing more sins than can be reckoned) *it defileth the whole Body*, (engaging all the faculties in heady pursuit,) *Jam*. 3. 6.

2. Discomposures obstruct *Duties*. This is the inconvenience which the Apostle (1 *Pet*. 3. 7.) tells us doth arise from disturbances among Relations; if the Wife or Husband do not carry well, so that discontents or differences arise, *their Prayers are hindered*. Duties then are obstructed, 1. In the *Act*. When the Heart is *out of frame*, Prayer is *out of season*, and there is an averseness to it; partly because all good things are (in such confusions) *burthensome* to the *Humor* that then prevails, which eats out all desire and delight to spiritual things: and partly because they *dare not* come into *Gods presence*; conscience of their own guilt, and

awe

awe of God hindring such approaches. 2. They obstruct the *right manner* of Performance, straitning the Heart, and contracting the Spirit, that if any thing be attempted, 'tis poorly and weakly performed. 3. And also the *success* of Duty is obstructed by discomposure. God *will not accept* such Services, and therefore Christ adviseth to *leave the Gift before the Altar*, (though ready for offering) where the Spirit is overcharged with Offences, or angry Thoughts, and *first to go and be reconciled to our Brother*, and then to *come and offer the Gift*, it being lost labour to do it before. From these sins of Omission and Commission, Satan can (and often doth) frame a dreadful charge against those that are thus concern'd, endeavouring to prove by these evidences, that they are yet (notwithstanding pretence of Conversion) in the gall of Bitterness, and bond of Iniquity, whereby the peace of Conscience is much shaken; and the more, because also

3. These discomposures of Soul give Satan a *fit season* for the management of his Accusation: Strong Accusations do often effect nothing, when the season is unsutable. Many a time he hath as much to say against the Comforts of Men, when yet they shake all off (as *Paul* did the Viper off his hand) and feel no harm. But that which prepares the Conscience to *receive* the Indictment, is a particular *disposition* which it is wrought into, by *suspicious credulity* and fearfulness: These make the Heart (as Wax to the Seal) ready to take any impression that Satan will stamp upon it: Now by long disturbances he works the Heart into this Mould very often, and upon a *double* account he gains himself a fit opportunity to charge home his exceptions. 1. In that he sets upon the Conscience with his Accusations, after the Heart hath been *long molested* and confused with its other Troubles; for then the Heart is weakned and *unable* to make *resistance* as at other times. An Assault with a fresh Party after a long conflict, disorders its Forces, and puts all to flight. 2. In that long and great discomposures of Mind, bring on a distemper of *Melancholy*; for 'tis notoriously known by common experience, that those *acid Humors* (producing this distemper) which have their rise from the Blood, may be occasioned by their violent Passions of Mind, the Animal Spirits becoming inordinate (by long discomposures of Sadness, Envy, Terrour, and fretful Cares) and the motion of the Blood being retarded, it by degrees departs from its temperament, and is infected with an acidity, so that Persons no way inclined

clined naturally to Melancholy may yet become ſo, by the diſquiets of their troubled Mind.

Both theſe ways, but chiefly Melancholy, the Devil hath his advantage for diſturbing the Conſcience. Melancholy (moſt naturally) inclines Men to be ſolicitous for their Souls welfare; but withall diſpoſeth them ſo ſtrongly to ſuſpect the worſt, (for 'tis a credulous ſuſpitious humour in things hurtful) and afflicts ſo heavily with ſadneſs for what it doth reſpect, that when Satan lays before Men of that humour their *Miſcarriages* under their diſcontents, their Impatience, Unthankfulneſs, Anger, raſh Thoughts and Speeches againſt God or Men, *&c.* withall ſuggeſting that ſuch an Heart cannot be right with God, after ſerious thoughts upon Satan's frequently *repeated* Charge, they cry out, *Guilty, guilty*, and then begins a new trouble for their Unregenerate Eſtate, and their ſuppoſed loſt Souls.

4. In this caſe uſually Satan hath greater *liberty to accuſe*, and by his Accuſations to moleſt the Conſcience, in that Men of diſcompoſed Spirits by the manifold evils ariſing thence *provoke God to deſert* them, and to leave them in Satans hand to be brought into an *hour* of Temptation. Satan's Commiſſion is occaſioned by our Provocations, and the Temptations ariſing from ſuch a Commiſſion, are uſually dreadful; they are *ſolemn* Temptations, and called ſo after a ſingular manner; for of theſe I take thoſe Scriptures to be meant, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into Temptation*, Mat. 26. 41. *And lead us not into Temptation*, Mat. 6. 13. Such Temptations are not common Temptations, and are of unknown force and hazard to the Soul, which way ſoever they are deſigned, either for Sin or Terror. For ſeveral things do *concur* in a ſolemn Temptation: As, 1. Satan doth in a ſpecial manner *challenge* a Man to the Combate, or rather he *challenges* God to give him ſuch a Man to fight with him, as he did concerning *Job.* This Chriſt tells us of, *Luk.* 22. 31. Simon, *Satan hath*
'Εξαιτήσατο. *deſired to have you*; the word ſignifies a *challenging* or daring, and it ſeems the Devil is oft daring God to give us into his hand, when we little know of it. 2. There is alſo a ſpecial *ſutableneſs of Occaſion*, and Snare, to the temper and ſtate of Men. Thus he took *Peter* at an advantage in the High Prieſts Hall, and in the caſe we now ſpeak of he takes advantage of Mens Provocations and Melancholy. 3. There is always a *violent proſecution*, which our Saviour expreſſeth under the compariſon of *ſifting*,

which

which is a restless agitation of the Corn, bringing that which was at the bottom to the top, and shuffling the top to the bottom, so that the Chaff or Dirt is always uppermost. 4. And to all this there is *divine permission*, Satan let loose and we left to our ordinary strength; as is implied in that expression, *He hath desired to have you, that he might sift you.* Now then if the Devil have such ground to give God a challenge concerning such Men, and if God do (as he justly may) leave such Men (whose bitterness of Spirit hath been as *a smoak in his Nostrils all the day*) in Satans hand, he will so shake them, that their Consciences shall have no rest. And this he can yet the more easily effect, because

5. Discomposures of Spirit have a particular *tendency* to incline our thoughts to *severity* and harshness, so that those who have had long and great disturbances upon any outward occasions, of Loss, Affliction, or Disappointment, *&c.* do naturally think (after a solemn review of such troubles) harshly *of God*, and *of themselves*; they are ready to conclude that God is surely angry with them, in that he doth afflict them, or that they have unsanctified hearts, in that their thoughts are so fretful and unruly upon every inconsiderable petty occasion. 'Tis so ordinary for Men under the weight of their Trouble, or under the sense of their Sin, to be sadly apprehensive of Gods Wrath, and their Souls hazard, that it were needless to offer Instances; let *Davids* case be instead of all. That his troubles begot such imaginations frequently, may be seen throughout the Book of the *Psalms*; we never read his complaints against persecuting Enemies, or for other Afflictions, but still his heart is affraid that God is calling Sin to remembrance; in *Psa.* 38. He is under great distress, and tells how low his Thoughts were; he was *troubled*, greatly *bowed down*, he *went mourning all the day long*; he expresseth his thoughts to have been, that *God had forsaken him*, ver. 21. and his hopes (though they afterward revived) were almost gone; he cryes out of his sins, as having *gone over his Head*, and become *a Burthen too heavy for him*, ver. 4. and therefore sets himself to confess them, *ver.* 18. He trembles at Gods Anger, and feels the *Arrows* of God *sticking fast* in him, *ver.* 2. But what occasioned all this? the Psalm informs us, God had visited him with *Sickness*, ver. 7. besides that (for one trouble seldom comes alone) his *Friends* were perfidious, *ver.* 11. his Enemies also were busie, laying *Snares* for his life, *ver.* 12. Now, his thoughts were to this purpose, that surely he had some way

or

or other greatly provoked God by his Sins, and therefore he fears *wrath* in every *rebuke*, and *displeasure* in every *chastisement*, *ver.* 1. The like you may see in *Psal.* 102. where the Prophet upon the occasion of *Sickness*, *ver.* 3 and 23. and the *reproach* of Enemies, *ver.* 8. is under great trouble, and ready to fail except speedy relief prevent, *ver.* 2. the reason whereof was this, that he concluded these troubles were evident tokens of God's indignation and wrath, *because of thine indignation and thy wrath*, *ver.* 10. From these five particulars we may be satisfied that it cannot be otherwise, and also how it comes to be so, that sometime trouble of Conscience is brought on, by other discomposing troubles of the Mind. For if these *take away* the Comforts, which supported the Soul, and *afford* also arguments to the Devil to prove a wicked Heart, and withal *a fit season* to urge them to a deep impression, God in the mean time standing at *a distance*, and the thoughts *naturally* inclined to conclude Gods Wrath from these troubles; how impossible is it that Satan should miss of disquieting the Conscience, by his strong vehement suggestions of wickedness and desertion?

In our enquiries after Satan's success in working these discomposures of mind, we have discovered, 1. That the disturbances thence arising are great; 2. That they have a tendency to trouble of Conscience. There is but one particular more to be spoken of relating to his success in this design, and that is,

3. These disturbances are *much in Satan's Power*. *Ordinarily* he can do it at pleasure, except when God restrains him from applying fit occasions, or when (notwithstanding these occasions) he extraordinarily suspends the effect, which he frequently doth when Men are enraged under suffering, upon the account of *the Gospel* and *Conscience*; for then though they be bound up *under Affliction and Iron*, yet the *Iron enters not into the Soul*; though they are *troubled*, they are not *distressed*. These *Extraordinaries* excepted, he can as easily *discompose* the Spirits of Men, as he can by Temptation, *draw* them into other Sins, which may be evidenced by these considerations:

1. We may observe, that those, whose *passionate* tempers do *usually* transport them into greater vehemencies, are *never* out of trouble. Their fits frequently return, they are never out of the Fire, and this is, because Satan is still provided of occasions suitable to their inclinations.

2. Though

2. Though God, out of his common bounty to mankind, hath allowed him a comfortable being in the World, yet we find that generally the Sons of Men under their various Occupations and Studies, are wearied out with *vexations of Spirit*; this *Solomon* in *Ecclesiastes* discovers at large in various imployments of Men, not exempting the pursuit of *Wisdom* and Knowledg, (*chap.* 1.18. *In much Wisdom is much grief, and he that increaseth Knowledg increaseth sorrow*) nor Pleasures, nor Riches, for by all these he shews that a Man is obnoxious to disquiets: so that the general account of Man's Life is but this, *Eccles.* 2. 23. *All his days are sorrows, and his travel grief, yea his heart taketh not rest in the night.* That it is so, is testified by common experience past denyal; but how it comes to be so, is the enquiry: 'tis either from *God*, or from *Satan*, working by occasions upon our tempers. That 'tis not from God is evident: for though sorrow be a part of that *Curse*, which Man was justly doomed unto, yet hath he appointed ways and means by which it might be so *mitigated*, that it might be tollerable, without *discomposure* of Spirit; and therefore *Solomon*, designing, in his *Ecclesiastes*, to set forth the chief good, shews that felicity consists not in the common abuse of outward things, (because that brings only vexation) but in the *fear of God* leading to future happiness, and in the mean time, in a *thankful, comfortable use* of things present without anxiety of Mind. Hence doth he fix his conclusion (as the result of his experience) and often repeats it; *There is nothing better for a Man, than that he should Eat and Drink, and that he should make his Soul enjoy good in his Labour.* *Eccles.* 2.24. & 3.12,13. & 5.18,19. Not that *Solomon* plays the *Epicure*, giving advice *to eat and drink, for to morrow we die*; nor that he speaks *deridingly* to those that seek their felicity in this life, as if he should say, *If ye do terminate your desires upon a terrene felicity, there is nothing better then to eat and drink,* &c. But he gives a serious *positive* advice, of enjoying the things of this life with *cheerfulness*, which he affirms proceeds from the sole bounty of God, as his singular gift; *It is the gift of God*, Eccles. 3.13. *'tis our portion*, that is, our allowance, Eccles. 5.19.) for these two expressions [*our Portion*, and *God's gift*] they are of the same signification with *Solomon* here) and when a Man hath power to enjoy this allowance in comfort, 'tis *God* that *answereth him in the joy of his heart*, ver. 20. 'Tis plain then, that God *sows good Seed in his Field*; the springing up therefore of these Tares of vexation, which

so generally afflict the Sons of Men, must be ascribed to this, *the Enemy hath done it.*

3. 'Tis also a considerable ground of suspition that Satan can do much in discomposures of Spirit, in that sometimes those whose tempers are *most cool* and *calm*, and whose singular *dependance* upon, and communion with God, must needs more *strengthen* them against these passionate vexations, are notwithstanding precipitated into violent commotions. *Moses* was naturally meek, above the common disposition of Men, and his very business was converse with God, whose presence kept his Heart under a blessed awe; yet upon the Peoples murmuring, he was so transported, with sullenness and unbelief at the waters of *Meribah*, Numbers 20. 10, 12. that *it went ill with him:* which *David* thus expresseth, Psal. 106. 33. *they provoked his Spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his Lips.* Who can suppose less in this matter, than that Satan, having him at advantage, hurried him to this rashness? specially seeing such vehemencies were not *usual* with *Moses*, and that his natural temper led him to the contrary. This hath some affinity with the next consideration, Which is,

4. That when Men most *foresee* the occasions of their trouble, and do most *fear* the trouble that might thence arise, and most *firmly design* to keep their hearts quiet, yet are they oft forced (against all care and resolution) upon *extravagant* heats. *David* resolved, and strenuously endeavoured, to possess his Soul in Serenity and Patience, (for what could be more, than solemn engagement? *Psal. 39. 1. I said I will look to my ways*, and what endeavours could be more severe, than to keep himself *as with Bit and Bridle?* what care could be more hopeful to succeed, than to be *dumb with silence?*) yet for all this, he could not keep his Heart calm, nor restrain his Tongue, *ver. 3. My Heart waxed hot within me, while I was musing, the Fire burned, then spake I with my Tongue.* Who suspects not the hand of Satan in this?

5. 'Tis also remarkable, that when we have *least reason* to give way to discomposure, when we have *most cause* to avoid all provocations, yet then we have *most occasions* set before us. When we would most *retire* from the noise of the World for private devotion, when we would most carefully *prepare* our selves for a solemn Ordinance, if we be not very watchful, we shall be *diverted* by business, *disturbed* with noises, or some special *occasion* of vexation shall importune us to disquiet our selves: when yet we shall observe

ſerve, if we have not theſe *ſolemn* affairs to wait upon, we ſhall have *fewer* of theſe occaſions of vexation to attend us. This cannot be attributed to meer *contingency* of occaſions, nor yet to our *tempers* ſolely; for why they ſhould be moſt *apt* to give us trouble, when they are moſt *engaged* to calmneſs, cannot well be accounted for; 'tis evidently then Satan, that maliciouſly directs theſe occaſions (for they have not a malicious ingeniouſneſs to prepare themſelves, without ſome other chief mover) at ſuch times as he knows would be moſt to our prejudice.

Theſe general conſiderations amount to more than a ſuſpition that it is much in Satan's power to give diſturbances to the Minds of Men; yet for the clearer manifeſtation of the matter I ſhall ſhew, that he can do much to bring about *occaſions* of diſcompoſure, and alſo to *ſtir* up the Paſſions of Men upon theſe occaſions.

1. That *occaſions* are much in his hand, I ſhall eaſily demonſtrate. For 1. There being *ſo many* occaſions of vexation to a weak craſy Mind, we may well imagine, that one or other is ſtill occuring, and while they thus offer themſelves Satan needs not be idle for want of an opportunity. 2. But if common occaſions do not ſo exactly ſuit his deſign, he can *prepare* occaſions; for ſuch is his *foreſight* and contrivance, that he can put ſome Men (without their privity to his intentions, or any evil deſign of their own) upon ſuch *actions* as may (through the ſtrength of prejudice, miſinterpretation, or evil inclination) be an offence to others; and in like manner, can *invite* thoſe to be *in the way* of theſe offences. I am ready to think, there was a contrivance of Satan (if we well conſider all circumſtances) to bring *David* and the Object of his Luſt together; while *Bathſhebah* was Bathing, he might uſe his Art in private motions to get *David* up to the Roof of his Houſe. But more eſpecially can the Devil prepare occaſions that do depend *upon the wickedneſs of his Slaves*; theſe are Servants under his command, he can *ſay to one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes.* If contempt, or injury, affronts or ſcorns, &c. be neceſſary for his preſent work againſt any, whom he undertakes to diſturb, he can eaſily put his Vaſſals upon that part of the Service; and if he have higher imployment for them, he ever finds them forward. And hence was it that when *Satan* deſigned to plunder *Job*, he could quickly perform it, becauſe he had the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans* ready at a call. 3. If both theſe ſhould

 fail

fail him, he can easily awaken in us, the *memory* of *old* occasions that have been heretofore a trouble to us: these being raised out of their Graves, will renew old disturbances, working afresh the *same* disquiets, which the things themselves gave us at first.

If Satan's power were bounded here, and that he could do no more than set before Men occasions of vexation, yet we might justly, on that single account, call him the *troubler* of the Spirits of Men; considering, that naturally the thoughts of Men are restless, and their imaginations ever rowling. If Men sequester themselves from all business, if they shut themselves up from commerce with Men; turn *Eremites*, (as *Jerom* did) on purpose to avoid disquiet, yet their thoughts would *hurry* them from place to place, sometimes to the *Court*, sometimes to the *Market*, sometimes to *Shews* and Pastimes, sometimes to *quarrellings*, sometimes they *view* Fields, Buildings and Countries, sometimes they *fancy* Dignities, Promotions and Honours, they are ever working upon one object or other, real or supposed; and according to the object, such will the affections be, high or low, joyful or sorrowful: so that if the utmost of what Satan could do, were no more than to provide occasions, discomposures would follow naturally. The evil dispositions of Men would thereby be set a working, though Satan stood by as an *Idle Spectator*. The *Serpent* (in our Breasts, as *Solomon* tells us *Eccles.* 10. 11.) would *bite without inchantment*, that is, except it were charmed. But Satan can do more than tempt *objectively*, when he hath provided the Fewel he can also bring Fire: For,

2. He can also set our passions *on work*, and incense them to greater fury than otherwise they would arrive at. We see persons that are distempered with passion, may be whetted up to an higher pitch of rage, by any officious *Flatterer*, that will *indulge* the humor, and *aggravate* the Provocation. Much more then can Satan do it by *whispering* such things to our Minds as he knows will increase the Flame; and therefore is it, that where the Scripture doth caution us against *anger*, (as the proper product of our own corruption, calling it *our wrath*, Eph. 4. 26, 27.) There also it warns us against *the Devil*, as the *incendiary*, that endeavours to heighten it. And where it tells us of the disorders of the tongue (which, though *a little Member*, *can* of it self do *great mischief*, *Jam.* 3. 6.) there it also tells us, that the *Devil* brings it an *additional*

Fire

Fire from *Hell*; *It is set on Fire of Hell.* And there are several ways by which Satan can irritate the Passions. As,

1. By presenting the occasions *worse* than they are, or were ever intended, unjusty *aggravating* all circumstances. By this means he makes the object of the passions the more displeasing, and hateful; this must of necessity provoke to an higher degree.

2. He can in a natural way move (as it were) the *Wheels*, and set the passions a going, if they were of themselves more dull and sluggish: for he hath *a nearer access* to our Passions than every one is aware of. I will make it evident thus: our Passions, in their workings, do depend upon the fluctuations, excursions and recursions of the Blood, and animal Spirits, as *Naturalists* do determine: Now that Satan can make his approaches to the *Blood*, *Spirits* and *Humors*, and can make *alterations* upon them, cannot be denied, by those that consider what the Scripture speaks in *Jobs* case, and in the cases of those, that were by possession of the Devil, made *Dumb*, *Deaf* or, *Epileptick*: for if he could afflict *Job* with *grievous Boils*, 'tis plain he disordered and *vitiated* his Blood and Humors, which made them apt to produce such Boils or Ulcers; and if he could produce an *Epilepsy*, 'tis evident that he could infect the *Lympha* with such a sharpness, as by vellicating the Nerves, might cause a Convulsion: and these were much more than the disorderly Motions of Blood, Spirits or Humors which raise the passions of Men. If any *object* to this, That then (considering Satan's malicious diligence) we must expect the Passions of Men would never be at rest. 'Tis *answered*, that this power of Satan is not *unlimited*, but oft *God prohibits* him such approaches, (and without his leave he can do nothing); and also *grace* in God's Children, working *calmness*, submission and patience, doth *ballance* Satan's contrary endeavour. For as hurtful and vexatious occasions, being represented by the Sence to the imagination; are apt to move the Blood and Spirits: so on the contrary, the *Ballast* of Patience and other Graces, doth so *settle* the Mind, that the Blood and Spirits are kept steady in their usual course.

Vid. Willis de anima Brut. *cap.* 8. & 9.

Job 2. 7.

3. When the Passions *are up*, Satan can by his suggestions make them *more heady* and violent. He can suggest to the Mind *Motives* and Arguments to forward it, and can stir up our *natural* corruption

ruption with all its powers to strike in with the opportunity. Thus he not only kindles the Fire, but blows the Flame.

4. And he can further *fix* the Mind upon these thoughts, and keep them still upon the Hearts of Men. And then they eat in the deeper, and like Poyson, diffuse their malignity the further. We see that Men, who are at *first* but in an *ordinary* fret, if they continue to *meditate* upon their Provocation, they increase their vexation, and if they give themselves to *vent* their Passions by their Tongues, though they begin in some moderation, yet as motion causeth heat, so their own words whet their rage, according to *Eccles.* 10. 13. *The beginning of the words of his Mouth is foolishness, but the latter end of his talk is mischievous madness.* The same advantage hath Satan against Men by *holding down* their thoughts to these occasions of discomposure.

If occasions be so much in Satan's power, and he have also so great an hand over Mens Passions, 'tis too evident that he can do very much to discompose the Spirits of Men, that are naturally obnoxious to these troubles, except God restrain him, and Grace oppose him. Thus have I spoken my thoughts of the first sort of troubles, by which Satan doth undermine the peace of Mens Hearts.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the second way to hinder Peace. Affrightments, the general Nature and Burthen of them, in several Particulars. What are the Ways by which he affrights. 1. Atheistical Injections. Observations of his proceeding in them. 2. Blasphemous Thoughts. 3. Affrightful Suggestions of Reprobation. Observations of his proceedings in that course. 4. Frightful Motions to Sin. 5. Strong immediate impressions of Fear. 6. Affrightful scrupulosity of Conscience.

THE next rank of troubles, by which the Devil doth endeavour to molest us, I call *Affrightments*. It is usual for those that speak of Temptations, to distinguish them thus: Some are (say they) *Enticements*, some are *Affrightments*; but then they extend these Affrightments further than I intend, comprehending under them, all those Temptations of sadness and terror, of which I am next to speak; but *by Affrightments*, I mean only *these perplexities of Spirit into which Satan casts Men, by overacting their fears, or astonishing their minds, by injecting unusual and horrid thoughts against their consents.* Some there are that have thought those Temptations, of which the Apostle complains 2 Cor. 12. 7. *(there was given me a Thorn in the Flesh, the Messenger of Satan to buffet me)* were of this kind, that is, horrid injections frequently repeated, as Men deal their blows in fighting. *Gerson* speaking of these, tells us they sometime come from the *sole* suggestion of Satan, troubling the fancy; and saying, *deny God, Curse God*, and then adds, *Such was the Thorn in the Flesh given to the Apostle.* But whether this was the trouble of the Apostle, or some other thing (for several things are conjectured, and nothing can be positively proved) we are sure (from the sad experience of many) that such troubles he doth often give; which I shall *first* explain in

Irritamenta Terriculamenta.

In calce *tom*. 4, *p*. 973. Talis stimulus datus fuit Apostolo.

in the *general*, and then give a *particular* of these frightful injections.

1. To explain the nature and burthen of this kind of trouble, I shall present you with a few *observations* about them. As,

1. These astonishing thoughts, are purely *injections*, such as Satan *casts* into the Mind, and not what the Mind of it self doth *produce*, as one expresseth it, they are more *darting* than *reflecting*. Not but that our natural corruption could *of it self* beget Blasphemous or Atheistical Thoughts, but when they have their rise from *our selves* solely, they do not *so startle* us, having some share (at least) of *our consent* going along with them, they appear not so strange. But in this case in hand, Satan is the *Agent*, and Men are the *Sufferers*, their Understandings and Souls being busied all the while to repel them, with the utmost of their reluctances. And to those that do thus strive against them, making resistance with all their strength, with Tears and Prayers, they are only their *Afflictions*, but not their *Sins*. For the Thoughts are not polluted by the *simple apprehension* of a sinful Object, no more than the Eye is defiled by *beholding* loathsome and filthy things: for then should the Mind of *Christ* have been defiled, when *Satan* propounded himself, blasphemously, as the *Object* of his Worship, his Mind as truly apprehended the meaning of that saying [*fall down and worship me*] as ours can do, when he casts such a thing immediately into our Thoughts. Which is a consideration to be observed diligenty, by those that meet with such sad exercise; if they do truly apprehend that they are but their sufferings, and that God will not charge the Sin upon them, they will more easily bear and overcome the trouble.

These injections are commonly *impetuous* and *sudden*, frequently compared to Lightning: and this is usually made a note of distinction, betwixt wicked blasphemous thoughts rising from *our natural corruption*, and *darted in* by Satan; the former being more *leasurely*, *orderly*, and *moderate* according to the usual course of the procedure of *humane* thoughts, the latter usually accompanied with an *hasty violence*, *subtilly*, and *incoherently* shooting into our Understandings, as Lightning into an House. So that all the Strength we have, can neither *prevent* them nor *expel* them, nor so much as *mitigate* the violence of them.

3. They are also for the most part *incessant*, and constant Troublers, where they once begin. Though Satan hath *variety*, in regard

regard of the matter of these amazing injections, (for sometimes he affrights one Man with blasphemous Thoughts, another, with Atheistical Thoughts, a third with grievous unusual Temptations to Sin, as Murther, &c.) yet, usually, he *fixeth* his Foot upon what he *first* undertakes. And as cunning Huntsmen, do not change their Game that they first rouse, that they may sooner speed in catching the Prey; so what frightful thought Satan begins the trouble with, that he persists in, and is withal so vehement in his pursuit, that he gives little intermission. He makes these unwelcom thoughts haunt them like Ghosts, whithersoever they go, whatsoever they do; he will give solemn onsets it may be *twenty* or *forty* times in a day: and at this rate he continues, it may be for some considerable time, so that they are not quit of the trouble for several *Months*, or it may be *Years*.

4. The matter of these Affrightments, are things most *contrary* to the *Impressions* of Nature, or Grace, and therefore *most odious* and troublesome. When he is upon this design, things that are most contrary to the belief and inclination of Men are best for his purpose. As Men that intend to affright others, chuse the most *ugly visors*, the *strangest garbs* and *postures*, and make the most uncouth *inhumane* noises; and the more monstrous they appear, the better they succeed in their purposes. Yet Satan doth not always chuse the *very worst*, for then most of the troubles of this kind, would be about the *same thing*, but he considers the strength of our *perswasions*, our *establishment* in Truths, the *probability* or improbability of an *after-game* with us; and accordingly sometimes refuseth to trouble us with injections, contrary to what we are *most firmly* rooted in, chusing rather that which (though contrary to our thoughts and resolves) we have not been fixed in, without *a great deal of labour*, and which (if there be occasion) might most fitly be *charged* upon us as our own, so that (whereas other Suggestions would be slighted, as apparent Malice, and *Scarecrows*) these are most *afflicting*, (as being an assault against such a Fort which *costs us* much to rear, and which we are most afraid to lose,) and most lyable to his *accusation* after a long continuance, as being the issue of our own unsetledness.

5. The first and most obvious effects of these injections, are the *utmost abhorrency of the Mind*, (which presently startles at the appearance of such odious things,) and the *trembling* of the Body, sometimes to an agony and fainting. The invasion of *one single*

injection, hath put some into such an heart-breaking affrightment, that they have not recovered themselves in a *whole days time*. This *trembling* of the Body, and *agony* of the Mind, are the usual consequences of any thing that is *surprising*, strange and fearful: and therefore is trembling of the Body made, by Divines, a *mark* to discover, that these hideous blasphemous thoughts are *cast in* by Satan, and have not their rise from our own hearts; for the horror of the mind is usually so great, when it is spoken to in this language, that it cannot bear up under its astonishment and trouble. Yea those very Men that are otherwise *prophane*, and can with boldness commit great iniquities; cannot but *shake*, and inwardly concieve an unspeakable hatred at these monstrous suggestions.

Horrore sui sic implent animum, ut tantum non pectus ipsum expectorare videantur — ad quorum præsentiam natura vel depravatissima contremiscit. *Arrowsmith Tract. Sacr.* l. 2. cap. 7. §. 6.

6. These Affrightments are more *common* than Men are usually aware of; they are by some thought to be rare and extraordinary; but this mistake ariseth from the *concealment* of these kind of Troubles, those that are thus afflicted, are often *ashamed* to speak to others what they find in their own hearts: but if all would be so ingenuous as to declare openly what fearful imaginations are obtruded upon them, it would appear that Satan very frequently endeavours to trouble Men this way.

7. These are very *grievous Burthens*, and hard to be born upon many accounts. (1.) Who can well express the inward *torture* and molestation of the Mind, when it is forced against its own *natural bent* and inclination, to harbour such Monsters within it self? how would nature reluct and abominate the drinking down of noisome pudled Water, or the swallowing of Toads and Serpents? (and hence was it that Persecutors in their devilish contrivances invented such kind of Tortures) and what less doth the Devil do, when he forceth Blasphemies upon their Thoughts? and commits *a rape* by a malicious violence upon their Imaginations? *David* under these Temptations, *Psal.* 73. 21. crys out, *Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins:* and it cannot be otherwise, for the reason already mentioned. Nature abhors to be forced to what is most contrary to it self, and so doth Grace. Now the things by which Satan works these Affrightments are contrary to Nature or Grace, or both together; and as they will strive to the utmost of their ability to cast out what is so opposite to them, so must the Devil to the utmost of his ability (if he would carry his design) strengthen himself in

his

his force, and from hence (as when Fire and Water are committed together) ariseth a most troublesome conflict; and indeed if there were a *compliance* of our consent, there would be *no Affrightment*; neither can this kind of Temptation be managed, except there be the *utmost dissent* of the Mind. If any think there is no great *ground* for these Temptations, because some of the particulars by which he is said to affright Men are *natural* to us, as (for instance) *Atheistical* Thoughts (which are by some called the *Master-vein* of our original Corruption, and by others, said to be in the heart of *every* Man naturally) and then consequently not so troublesome as is imagined, *&c.* I answer, That when Divines call these, or blasphemous Thoughts, natural, they do not mean that they are *natural impressions engraven on us by Creation* (for they assert the contrary) that 'tis a *natural* and *unextinguishable* impression upon every Man that *there is a God*, &c. and usually give in this for proof, that the greatest *Atheists* in *fear* and extremity will manifest a *secret belief* of a Deity, by calling out, *O God*, &c. or by some other *posture*, (as *Caligula* by hiding himself when it thundered) but they mean only, that our *natural corruption may produce these Thoughts*, and that they are the natural issues thereof; and therefore *Perkins* in answer to a question of this nature, tells us, that these *two* Thoughts [*there is a God*] and [*there is no God*] may be, and are *both* in the *same* heart. Now as this will give us the *reason* why Satan doth make *choice* of these Thoughts to trouble us withall, which may *also* rise from our selves, (which I have hinted before, and shall presently again touch upon:) so it tells us still, that whether these Thoughts arise from our own Corruption, or from Satan, our *natural impressions* are strong against them, and withall that they cannot be *so* affrightful but when *Satan* doth manage them, and when the contrary impressions of Nature are awakened to give *strong resistance*, and then that strugling must be as the tearing of our Bowels, and still the worse in that we are incessantly pursued: Satan still casting back (with unwearied labour) the same Thoughts as they are repulsed and rejected; as Souldiers that besiege Cities use to cast over the Walls their fir'd *Granado's*. (2.) These are also grievous, as they set the Mind upon the *Rack*, and stretch it under laborious and *doubtful enquiries* after the grounds or *causes* of this kind of trouble, for the Heart astonished with such cursed Guests against his Will, presently reflects upon God and it self, *What have I done? and*

Perkins *Cases of Conscience.* l. 1. cap. 10. § 2.

Treatise of Imaginations. cap. 3.

wherefore am I thus disquieted with Monsters? why doth the Righteous Lord suffer Satan to break open my Heart, and fill me with such fearful Thoughts? but when Mens enquiries are not so high, but detained in a consideration of the *nature* of the trouble and *manner* of its working, without looking up to the Providence of God, then are their troubles *increased*. (3.) As these Injections necessitate Men in their own defence, to *oppose*, and every way to resist, 'tis an increase of the Burthen: What Pleadings are they put to? what Defiances? what endeavours to call off the thoughts? and all to little purpose; while the trouble continues, they are forced to ly in their Armour, and to be constantly in their Ward. (4.) And yet are they further troublesome in the *After-Game* that Satan plays by these Thoughts. 'Tis not all of his design to affright Men, but he usually hath another Temptation to come in the *rear* of this, and that is to turn these *Affrightments* into *Accusations*, and by urging them *long* upon the hearts of Men, to make them believe that they are their *own* Thoughts, the issues of their own natural Corruption, and after Men are by continual Assaults weakned, their Senses and Memory dulled, their Understanding confounded, *&c.* they easily conclude against themselves; The Tempter imputes all the horrid Blaspemy to them, boldly calls them guilty of all; and because their Thoughts have dwelt long upon such a *Subject*, and withall knowing that corrupt Nature of *it self* will lead Men to such horrid Blasphemies or Villanies (which makes it *probable* that it might be their own fault, and for this *reason* Satan makes choice of such Injections as may in the Accusation seem most *likely* to be true) being strongly charged as guilty, they *yield*; and then begins another trouble more fearful than the former: Oh! what sad thoughts have they then of themselves? as the most vile blasphemous Wretches! sometimes they think, *that 'tis impossible that other Mens Hearts should entertain such intollerable things within them as theirs; and that none was ever so bad as they:* sometimes they think, *that if Men knew what vile imaginations and monstrous things are in their Minds, they would in very Zeal to God and Religion stone them, or at least exclude them from all commerce with Men; sometimes they think their Sin to be the Sin against the Holy Ghost; sometimes they think God is engaged in point of Honour to shew upon them some remarkable Judgment, and they verily look for some fearful stroke to confound them, and live under such a frightful expectation.* These and many more to this purpose are their thoughts,

Vid. Dickson Therap. Sacra. *lib. 3. cap. 26.* § 7.

thoughts, ſo that theſe Temptations are every way troubleſome both in their firſt and ſecond effects.

Thus I have in the general expreſſed the *nature* of theſe affrightments; what the particular injections are by which he ſtudies to affright Men, I ſhall next declare. They are principally *ſix*:

1. *Atheiſtical Thoughts.* By injecting theſe into the Mind, he doth exceedingly affright Men, and frequently for that end doth he ſuggeſt, that there is no God, and that the Scriptures are but deluſive contrivances, *&c.* Concerning theſe I ſhall note a few things. As,

1. Though there be an obſervable difference betwixt *Atheiſtical injections*, and *Temptations to Atheiſme*, not only in the *deſign*, (Satan chiefly intending *ſeduction* in the latter, and *affrightment* by the former) but alſo in the *manner* of proceeding: (for when he deſigns *chiefly* to tempt to Atheiſm, he firſt prepares his way by *debauching* the Conſcience with vitious or negligent living. According to *Pſal.* 14. 1. that which makes Men *ſay in their Hearts there is no God*, is this, that *they are corrupt, and have done abominable works*; and in this method was famous *Junius* tempted to Atheiſm. But when he *chiefly* intends to affright, he ſets upon Men, that by a *watchful* and ſtrict converſation cut off from him that advantage) yet he doth *ſo manage* himſelf, that he can turn his courſe *either way*, as he finds probability of ſucceſs after tryal; for he preſſeth on upon Men moſt, where he finds them *moſt to yeild*, ſo that thoſe who were but at firſt affrighted, may at laſt be ſolemnly perſwaded and urged to believe the ſuggeſtion to be true, if they give him any incouragement for ſuch a procedure.

2. *Contemplative Heads* and great Searchers are uſually moſt troubled in this manner, partly becauſe they ſee *more difficulties* than other Men, and are more *ſenſible* of Humane inability to reſolve them, and partly becauſe God (who will not ſuffer his Children to be tempted *above what they are able*) doth *not permit* Satan to moleſt the *weaker* ſort of Chriſtians with ſuch dangerous aſſaults.

3. Perſons of eminent and ſingular *Holineſs* may be (and often are) troubled with Atheiſtical thoughts, and have ſad conflicts about them, Satan labouring (where he cannot prevail for a poſitive entertainment of Atheiſm) at leaſt to *diſquiet* their Minds by haunting them with his Injections, if not to *weaken* their aſſent

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to theſe Fundamental Truths, in which he ſometimes ſo prevails, that good Men have publickly profeſſed, that they have found it an harder matter to believe that there is a God, than moſt do imagine.

4. Satan lies at the *catch* in this deſign, and uſually takes Men at the advantage, *ſuddenly* ſetting upon them, either in the *height* of their Meditations and Enquiries into Fundamental Truths, (for when they ſoar aloft, and puzzle themſelves with a difficulty, then is he at hand to adviſe them to cut the knot which they cannot unlooſe) or in the *depth* of their Troubles, (for when Men cannot reconcile the daily Afflictions and Sufferings which they undergo, with the love and care of God toward his Children, then 'tis Satans ſeaſon to tell them that there is no ſupream Diſpoſer of things); in both theſe caſes the Devil leaps upon them unawares (like a Robber out of a Thicket) who if he do not wound them by the Dart of Atheiſtical Injection, at leaſt he is ſure to aſtoniſh them, and to confound them with amazement. For,

5. Sometimes he purſues with wonderful *violence*, and will *diſpute* with admirable ſubtilty, urging the *inequality* of Providence, the *ſeeming contradictions* of Scripture, the *unſuitableneſs* of Ordinances to an infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs, with many more Arguments of like kind; and this with ſuch unexpected acuteneſs, and ſeeming demonſtration, that the moſt holy Hearts and wiſeſt Heads ſhall not readily know what to anſwer, but ſhall be forced to betake themſelves to their Knees, and to beg of God that he would rebuke Satan, and uphold them that their Faith fail not: Nay, he doth not only diſpute, but by urging, and (with unſpeakable earneſtneſs) *threaping* the Concluſion upon Men, doth *almoſt force* them to a Perſwaſion, ſo that they are almoſt carried off their Feet whether they will or no. Which was the very caſe of *David* (when the Devil purſued him with Atheiſtical thoughts on the occaſion of the proſperity of wicked Men, and his daily Troubles,) *Pſal.* 73. 2. *My Feet were almoſt gone, my Steps had well-nigh ſlipt.*

6. Yet for all this, he ſometimes lays aſide his Sophiſtical Subtilty, and betakes himſelf to an *Impudent Importunity*; for ſometimes he inſiſts only on *one* Argument, not changing that which he firſt took up, nor ſtrengthening his Suggeſtion with variety of Arguments, but by frequent repetition of the ſame Reaſon, perſiſts

ſiſts to urge his injected Atheiſm. This gives no diſcovery of any deep reach if he deſigned to perſwade, (for 'tis ſcarce rational to imagine, that ſerious Men, who by many Arguments are fully perſwaded there is a God, ſhould readily loſe their hold upon the appearance of one Objection,) but it ſhews that he purpoſeth only to moleſt. And this appears more evidently, when he contents himſelf with weak and *trivial* Arguments, which the afflicted Party can anſwer fully, and yet cannot for all that quit themſelves of the trouble : for inſtance, 'Tis not very many years ſince a ſerious and pious Perſon came to me, and complained, that he could not be at reſt for Atheiſtical thoughts that perpetually haunted him, and upon a particular enquiry into the cauſe and manner of his Trouble, he told me the firſt riſe of it was from his Obſervation, that I had interpreted ſome Scriptures otherwiſe than he had heard ſome others to have done ; but withall, he added, that he knew the reaſon of his perplexity was but ſilly, and that which he could eaſily anſwer : This being no juſt charge againſt the Scripture, (whoſe ſenſe and truth might for all that be one, and uniform to it ſelf) but only an implication of Humane weakneſs appearing in the different apprehenſions of Expoſitors; yet notwithſtanding, he affirmed he could not ſhake off the trouble, and that his thoughts were ever urged with the ſame thing for a long time together ; nay, ſuch is his impudency in this kind of trouble, that thoſe who know 'tis the beſt way *not to diſpute* Fundamentals with Satan, but with abhorrency to reject him (after the example of Chriſt) with a *Get thee behind me Satan*, and accordingly do with their utmoſt ſtrength reject them, yet they find that he doth not readily deſiſt.

How ſad is this Trouble ? how are pious Perſons affrighted to ſee the Face of their Thoughts made abominably ugly and deformed by theſe violent and unavoidable Injections ? 'tis not only *weariſome* to thoſe that know it to be ſolely *Satans malice*, but it often proves to be an *aſtoniſhing ſurpriſal :* like that of a Traveller, who while he paſſeth on his way without foreſight or thought of danger, is ſuddenly brought to the top of a great Precipice, where when he looks down to the vaſt deep below, his Head ſwims, his Heart pants, his Knees tremble, and the very fear of the ſudden danger ſo confounds him that he is (through exceſſive dread) ready to fall into that which he would avoid : ſo are theſe amazed at ſo great hazards before them. Satan could not by all his Art

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prevail with them to abandon the holy ways of God in exchange for the pleasures of Sin, and now they seem to be in danger to lose all at once, and yet 'tis more affrightful by far to those that charge (through Satans cunning) all this Atheism *upon themselves*.

2. Another affrightful Injection, is that of *blasphemous Thoughts*, as that God is not just, not compassionate, that Scriptures and Ordinances are but low and sorry things, *&c.*

That Satan doth delight to force such Thoughts upon Men, is evident, (1.) From his *Nature*. He is a *blasphemous* Spirit, and withal so *malicious*, that whatsoever is in his cursed Mind, he will be ready to vent upon all occasions. (2.) From his *Practice*: for where he can obtain the rule over Mens Imaginations, (as in some distracted Persons, and those that are distempered with Feavers,) he usually makes them vomit forth Oaths, Cursings, and Blasphemies, and this he doth to some that (while they have had the use of their Reason) have not been observed to give their Tongue the liberty of swearing, or cursed speaking. (3.) From his *professed Design* in the case of *Job*, concerning whom he boasted to God himself, that he would make him curse him to his face, and accordingly tempted him by his Wife to curse God and die. (4.) From the sad *experience* of those that have suffered under this sad Affliction; for many have complained of blasphemous Thoughts, and those whom he cannot conquer, he will thus trouble. Neither need we think it strange that the Devil can impress Blasphemies upon the Imaginations of Men *against their wills*, when we consider that he could make *Saul* (in his fits) to behave himself like an *inspired Person*, and cause him to utter things beyond, and unsutable to his disposition, (after the rate and manner of those raptures which Idolatrous Priests used to be transported withal:) this in 1 *Sam.* 18. 10. is called *Sauls prophesying*, when the *evil Spirit from the Lord vexed him*; and is the same with that which is spoken concerning *Baal*'s Priests, 1 *King.* 18. 29. *They prophesied until the time of the offering of the Evening Sacrifice*; that is, they were exercised with Trances and rapturous Furies, in which they uttered strange Sounds and Speeches. How easily then may Satan possess the Fancies of Men with Blasphemies? so that the *unwilling* may be troubled with them, and those that are deprived of the benefit of Reason, may (from the power of the impres-

Ba chatur Vates. *Virg.*

impression upon their imagination) vent them with a kind of unwillignefs.

Melancholy Persons do very frequently meet with this kind of Trouble, Satan having a great power upon their *Imagination*, and great *advantages* from the darkness of that Humor, to make the fear arising from such thoughts the more *astonishing*, and to *delude* them into an apprehension that they are guilty of all that passeth through their thoughts, and also to work this perplexity to more *dismal effects*. In these kind of Men he doth play the *Tyrant* with such Injections, abusing them to such an height, as if they were his Vassals and Slaves, whose Thoughts and Tongues were in his (and not their own) keeping ; and so strongly doth he possess them with this perplexity sometimes, that all the counsels, reasonings, or advice of others, cannot in the least satisfie or relieve them ; yet notwithstanding I have known several under this Affliction, who (when by *Physick*, the state of their Bodies hath been altered) have found themselves at ease immediately, the Trouble gradually and insensibly ceasing of it self.

Others there are that have great vexation from these Thoughts, and these are commonly such as by some *long* and grievous Pain, Sickness or other Crosses, have their Spirits *fretted* and imbittered ; then is Satan ready to suggest, that God is cruel, or regardless of his People ; and these Thoughts are the more dreadful, because fretting and murmuring Spirits have a natural tendency to to think harshly of God ; so that Satan in this case doth with the more *boldness* obtrude these Suggestions upon them, finding so great a forwardness toward such Imaginations, and also with greater *severity* he doth *reflect* upon them, as being in some likelihood compliant and consenting.

When other Persons (not so concerned as these two sorts of Men above mentioned) are assaulted with blasphemous thoughts, the fits are *less permanent*, and (because they easily *discover* the design, and Author of them) not highly affrightful, though still troublesome.

The burthen of these injections are much like the former, very sadly afflicting. For who can easily bear the *noise* of Satan while he shouts continually into their Ears odious Calumnies, and Blasphemous Indignities against God ? *David* could not hear wicked Men blaspheme God, but it was *as a Sword in his Bones*, exceeding painful: the impressions of *Nature*, (that teach us to re-

vere and honour God) the power of *Education* (that confirms these impressions) the *perswasion* of Faith (that assures us of the reality and infinite Excellency of a Godhead) and the force of Love (that makes us more sensibly apprehensive of any Injury, or Dishonour done to him whom we love above all): *all these* do suffer by these violent Incursions of Satan, and the Sufferer finds himself to be pained and tortured in these *noble parts*. How grievous must it be to a Child of God, to have his Ear *chained* to these intollerable ingrateful Reproaches? Especially when we consider that the Devil will in this case, utter the *most dreadful* Blasphemies he can devise, which will still add to the Affliction, (for even those Men that through habit, can well bear ordinary petty Oaths, will yet startle at outragious prodigious Swearing) and therefore what ever *Covert* and consequential Blasphemies may be to some Men, these *impudent* hideous abuses of the Holy and Just God, must needs sadly trouble those that are forced to hear them. And the more *constant* the greater trouble. Who would not be weary of their Lives, that must be forced to undergo this Vexation still without intermission? And yet, the Devil can advance the trouble a little higher by the *Apparatus*, or Artificial Dread, which he puts upon the Temptation in the *manner* of the injection. As the *Roaring* of the Lion increaseth terrour in the Beasts of the Field, who without that, would tremble at his presence; and as the *Thundering* and Lightning at the giving of the Law, increased the fear of *Israel*; So when Satan is upon this design, he *shakes* as it were the House, and makes a noise that the fright may be increased.

3. *Suspicious fears* of being excluded out of Gods eternal *Decree of Election*, is another of his affrightments. This is, when Satan boldly takes upon him to *determine* God's secret Counsel concerning any Man; peremptorily asserting, that *he is none of Gods Elect*. In which case he often doth only inject the *suspicion confidently*, without *offer* of Proof; or if he use Arguments, they never amount to a proof of his Assertion, (neither is it possible they should, for these are among *God's secrets*, and out of Satans reach) though possibly they may prove the Person to be *not Converted* at present. So that this kind of trouble differs exceedingly, from those disquiets of Temptation, which frequently Men suffer about their *state* of Regeneration. And indeed, the *Question* should not be *confounded*, it being of great concern to Men,

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when their Peace is assaulted, to be able to observe the difference betwixt these two Assertions, *Thou art not Elected:* And, *Thou art not yet Regenerated.* Seeing the latter being granted, there yet remains a hope of the *Probability*, or *Possibility* of that Mans Conversion afterwards: (the suspitions of Non-conversion are more common, and not so dangerous); Nay, in Unregenerate Persons, the fears of their being yet in that condition (being joyned with diligence and care to avoid the danger) are necessary, and advantagious; but) the former being granted, *all hopes* are, together with that concession, *laid off*, which must needs make the affrightment intollerable. In this we may observe,

1. That Satan for the better management of this Design, doth not only inject these suspitions in the most *dreadful Language*, (as *Thou art a lost and damned Wretch, hopelesly miserable to all Eternity: God hath not Elected thee to Life, but prepared for thee (as a Vessel of wrath) the Lake of fire and Brimstone for ever*, &c.) But also he doth assert them with the highest *Peremptoriness* imaginable, as if he had *Authority* from God to pronounce a Sentence of Condemnation against a Man: This must needs amaze the Afflicted unspeakably.

2. In this he also *observes his Advantages*: For there are some Men so sadly suited to this Design, that Satan comes better to speed upon them, than others. Usually he fixeth his Eyes, 1. Upon *young Persons* at their *first* serious attendances upon, and considerations of Scripture Truths. Their hearts are then *tender*, (Youth hath a natural tender-heartedness; we find them coupled together in *Rehoboam*'s Character, 2 *Chron.* 13. 7. *When* Rehoboam *was young, and tender-hearted*) and they are apt to receive strong impressions. When those who were formerly mindless of their Spiritual concern, begin to be serious, they can no sooner fall upon a Consideration of those weighty Doctrines: That there are *Sheep* and *Goats*, some *Saved*, and some *Damned*; that the Blessed are *few*, in comparison of the *many* that take the Broad-way to destruction, and that these were from Eternity *ordained unto* Life, and *these only*, &c. No sooner (I say) begin they to ponder these things, but Satan is ready with this suspition, *And what dost thou know, but thou art one of these excluded Wretches? If but few are saved, a thousand to one thou art none of them? For why should God look upon thee more than another?* These are his first Assays with Young-Men, beginning to be se-

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rious, in which afterward he proceeds with greater boldneſs, as he ſeeth occaſion. 2. He alſo doth this to Perſons that are *ſome way quickned* to a devotional fear of God, and care of their Souls, but withal are *ignorant*, and not able *diſtinctly* to apprehend, and *orderly* to range the Doctrines of the Scriptures into a due *conſiſtency* with one another. Their *careful fears* make them enquire into what God hath ſaid concerning the everlaſting ſtate of Men; and before they can be able to *digeſt* the Principles of Religion, Satan ſets ſome Truths *edg-ways* againſt them, which put them into great affrightment, while (through their ignorance) other Truths (appointed and declared for the ſatisfaction of the minds of thoſe that hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs) cannot come in to their relief. How ſtartling muſt the truths of Gods Election be, when they ſtand forth *alone*, and are not accompanied with the *Invitations* of the Goſpel, that promiſe *Pardon* and *Acceptance* to all that will come in and ſubmit to Chriſt? Satan uſually holds ſuch kind of Men, to the conſideration of thoſe Truths, that have the moſt *diſmal Aſpect*, and while they are ſtopt there, they can draw forth no other concluſions than theſe, *That they are in hazard, and for ought they know, utterly loſt.* 3. Satan hath alſo this Plot againſt thoſe that by ſome *grievous* iniquity, or *long continuance* in ſin, have highly provoked the Lord. Here he uſeth Arguments from the heinouſneſs of their Iniquity; thou art a *Reprobate*, becauſe thou haſt committed theſe *great evils*, theſe are *marks* of Damnation, *&c.* Which Arguments, though they be of *no value*, and no way proving that for which they are brought, yet Satan *injecting ſuſpitions*, and their own Conſciences in the mean time juſtly accuſing, they ſo ſink under their fear, that they ſuffer Satan to make *what concluſion* he will, and then they *ſubſcribe* to it. 4. Above all, *Melancholy* Perſons give the Devil the *greateſt* advantage to raiſe affrightments. That Diſtemper naturally fills Men with ſad thoughts, and is credulous of the worſt evil that can be objected againſt him that hath it. Of it ſelf, it can create the blackeſt Conceits, and ſaddeſt Surmiſes, and then believes its own fancy. When Satan ſtrikes in with this Humour, they are the more confirmed in their Suſpitions, and the Fright is the greater, becauſe they are as *Incredulous* of what is good (if it be told them) as they are apt to *believe* what is evil, and to believe it, becauſe *they fear* it; though no other reaſon were offered: But much more when

Finguntque, creduntque.

Dum timet, credit.

when Satan in a *Prophetick* manner foretels their misery, and assures them they must never be happy.

3. The suspitions which the Devil hath by these advantages *raised up*, he doth endeavour to *increase*, and to root them *deeply* in the minds of them, upon whom he hath thus begun: And indeed, by frequent *inculcating* the same thing with his continued *peremptoriness* of asserting the certainty of their Non-election, he at last brings up very many to a *full perswasion* that it is so; and besides other Arts that he may have, or exercise in this particular, he commonly practiseth upon Men, by *perverting* the true *Intendment* and use of the Doctrine of Election. That there is such a thing as *Election*, and that of a *determinate* number, are Truths undeniable; and the end of their discovery in the Gospel, is the *comfort* and *confirmation* of the Converted. Here they may see Gods *unchangeable love* to them, how much they *stand engaged* for the freeness of Grace, and that *the Foundation of God is sure*, &c. For to this purpose doth our Saviour improve these Doctrines, *John* 17. 6, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16. But nothing of this is spoken to *discourage* any Man from his *endeavours*, neither can any Man, *prove that he, or any other, is excluded out of the decree of Election*, (except in case of the sin against the Holy Ghost); neither is it possible for the *Devil* to *prove* any such thing against any Man; neither *ought any to suppose himself not Elect:* But on the contrary, if he is *willing to forsake sin*, and *desirous to be reconciled to God*, he ought to apprehend a *probability*, that he is Elected, because the proffer of Christ is made *to all that will recieve him*. And therefore should Men *stop* their ears against such Suggestions, and not dispute that with Satan, but rather *hearken* to the Commands, Exhortations, and Promises of Scripture, it being most certain that these *secret things belong to God*, Deut. 29. 29. and are no Mans *rule* to walk by, seeing *revealed things only belong to us*. All this the Devil perverts, for he endeavours to make Election the *immediate Object* of our Faith, and *our Rule* to walk by; as if it were necessary that every Man *knew Gods eternal purpose* concerning him, before *he begin* his endeavours. And as he argues some Men into a *perverse carelessness* upon the ground of Election, making them to conclude, that *If they are ordained to Life, they shall be saved, though they live wickedly; if they be not, they shall be damned, though they endeavour never so much to the contrary*. So he also argues some, from this Doctrine, into

into terrible *fears of Damnation*, becauſe they cannot be aſſured *aforehand, that their names are written in Heaven.* And theſe dreadful ſuſpitions he doth labour to ſtrengthen, by ſome Mens *unwary* handling of the Doctrine of Non-election; when ſome Preachers unskilfully urge the *dangerous ſigns* of Reprobation, or ſpeak *ſeverely* of God's Decrees, without due *caution* and *promiſe* of Mercy to all penitent Sinners. Or when ſome, unskilful in the methods of comforting the diſtreſſed in Conſcience, becauſe they are not able to ſhew the Afflicted their Condition, or to ſpeak *a word in ſeaſon* to quiet their Minds, and to *direct* them what courſe to take, do uſually refer them to God's Decree, and tell them, If God have *decreed* them to Salvation, they *ſhall be ſaved*. Satan doth induſtriouſly hold them there, by this means he leads them from the Promiſes and their Duty, and keeps them *muſing* and *poring* upon Election, till they are *bewildred*, and cannot find the way out. Thus have ſeveral continued under their Affrightments for many Years.

4. We may obſerve, That when Satan hath brought them into this ſnare, he doth *tyrannically domineer* over them. He doth *deride* them under their trouble, and *mock* at them when *their fear comes* upon them. And becauſe now the very thought, or hearing of *Election* is as a Daggar to the heart, and a *dreadful ſound in their Ears*, he delights to *repeat* it to them; for the very naming of the word, becomes as dreadful, as the ſentence of *Condemnation* to a Malefactor, being always accompanied with this Reflection; *Oh how miſerable am I, that have no part nor portion in it!* Beſides, he doth buſie their minds with *imaginary repreſentations* of Hell, and ſets before them as in *a Scheme*, the day of Judgment, the terrours of the Damned, the ſentence againſt the Goats on the Left-hand, the intollerable pains of everlaſting Burnings, and (that which is the miſery of all theſe Miſeries) the *Eternity* of all. Thus he forceth their Meditations, but ſtill with Application to themſelves; neither doth he ſuffer them to reſt in the Night, but they are terrified with ſad *Dreams*, and the *Viſions of the Night* do diſquiet them.

5. How *grievous* this Affrightment is, I ſhould next obſerve, but that is partly expreſſed in the aforegoing Particulars, and may yet more fully appear by a conſideration of theſe 3 things. 1. That a Man hath nothing *dearer* to him than his Soul: Alas, that cannot be counterballanced by the gaining of the whole World,

World, and to have *no hope* or expectancy of its Salvation, must needs be terribly affrightful. 2. These suspitions of Non-election prevailing, all *Promises* and *Comforts* are urged in vain, and they commonly return them back again to those that offered them, with this reply: *They are true, and useful to those unto whom they appertain, but they belong not unto me.* Nay, all means are rejected as useless. If such be advised to Pray, or Read, they will in their fit of Affrightment *refuse* all; upon this reason, that *they are not Elected.* And then to what purpose (say they) is Prayer, or any endeavours? *For who can alter his Decree?* And indeed, if their Affrightments *continued* at an height without intermission, they would never do any thing; but this is their help, that some secret *under-ground hopes* which they espy not, do revive at least sometimes, and put them upon endeavours, which (through Gods blessing) become means of better information. 3. Though Satans injections of Non-election be altogether unproveable, and withal so terrifying, that it might be supposed Men should not be forward in their belief of so great an unhappiness: Yet can he prevail so far, that the Persons above named (especially the Melancholy) are made to believe him, and this chiefly by possessing their imaginations, with his *frequent confident* Affirmations. Wee see it is a common practice to teach Birds Musical Notes and Sounds, which is only by constant repetition, till a strong Impression is made upon their Fancy: And thus may one Man impose upon the imagination of another with his Songs, or Sayings: for what we hear often, we cannot forbear to repeat in our thoughts, being strongly fixed upon our Fancy. No wonder then, if Satan by often repeating, *Thou art not Elected, thou art Damned,* &c. do form so strong an impression upon the imagination, that poor amazed Creatures learn *to say after him*, and then take the *Ecchoes* of their *Fancy*, to be the *voice of Conscience condemning them.* Now then, if the *unhappiness* (suspected) be the *greatest* beyond all comparison, if these suspitions entertained cut off all *succours* of Comfort that may arise from the Promises of God, and the endeavours of Man, if Satan can prevail with Men to entertain them with any *perswasion* (as we see he can) how dreadfully will these perswasions recoil upon a Man? And thus will his thoughts run, *I am perswaded I am not Elected; and if not Elected, then Comforts and Prayers are all in vain; and if these be in vain, there is no possibility of Salvation, nor the least hope of a who*

knows,

knows, or a peradventure; *and if that, Oh unspeakably miserable?* Under these astonishing thoughts doth Satan exercise their hearts by suspitions of Non-election. But

4. Sometimes he takes another Course to affright Men, and that is by injecting *Motions* of some *abominable Sin*, or evil into their minds, to the commission whereof he seems strongly to sollicite; yet not with any *full* intention, or *expectation* of prevalency, but with a purpose to *molest* and disquiet. And for that end, he commonly chuseth such sins as are *most vile* in their own Nature, and *most opposite* to the Dispositions of Men: Thus he injects thoughts of Uncleanness to a chast Person; thoughts of injustice and wrong to a Just Man; thoughts of revenge and cruelty to a Week Man; thoughts of rejoycing in the loss and misery of others to the Merciful Man. Or else he injects motions to such sins, wherein formerly Men have been *overtaken*, but have been made *bitter* by deep repentance; the very thoughts whereof are now become most *loathsome*. And sometimes he pursues Men with thoughts of *Self-Murther*, even while there is *nothing* of discontent or trouble in their Minds, to second such a Temptation. By this manner of proceeding, he creates great Affrightments to the Hearts of men. For

1. These are strange *Surprisals*; and Persons under this kind of Trouble, cannot but be amazed to find such thoughts within them, which are most *contrary* to their Dispositions, or their most *serious Resolves*. The chast Person tempted to Uncleanness, or the just man to Revenge; the humble Person urged to the same Sin that cost him so dear, *&c.* They *wonder* at their own Hearts, and while they *mistake* these Temptations, by judging them to be the *issues* of their own *Inclination*, with astonishment they cry out, *Oh I had thought that I had mortified these Lusts, but what a strange Heart have I? I see sin is as strong in me as ever? And I have cause to fear my self*, &c.

2. And this is yet a greater trouble, because usually Satan takes them at *some advantage* of an offered occasion, or opportunity, then he gives them a sudden push, and with importunity urgeth them *to take the time*; this often affrights them into Trembling, and their Fears do so *weaken* their purposes, that their hazards are the greater, in that they are astonished into an *Inactivity*. So that in this case, the Men of Might do not readily find their Hands.

3. Neither

3. Neither are theſe motions *ſudden* and *tranſient* glances, which periſh as ſoon as they are born, (though it be a very frequent thing with Satan to caſt in motions into the Heart for trial ſake, without further proſecution) but he (in this caſe) purſues with frequent *Repetitions*, following hard after them, to the increaſe of the Affrightment. So that for a long time together Men may be afflicted with theſe Meſſengers of Satan to buffet them; and though they may Pray earneſtly againſt them that they may be removed, yet they find the motions continue upon them. Which muſt needs be an *hateful annoyance* to an upright Heart, that doth *know* it to be only Satans deſign to affright, much more muſt it afflict thoſe that do *not perceive* the Contriver and end of ſuch motions, but judg them to be the natural workings of their own evil Heart.

4. Satan can alſo affright Men by *immediate impreſſions of Fear* upon their minds. He can do much with the imagination, eſpecially when Perſons are diſtempered with Melancholy; for ſuch are naturally fearful, and any impreſſions upon them have the deepeſt, moſt piercing operation. They are always framing to themſelves diſmal things, and abound with black and dark Conceits; ſurmiſing ſtill the worſt, and always incredulous of what is good. Hence it is that ſometimes Men are ſeized upon by Fearfulneſs and Trembling, when yet they cannot give any *tollerable account* of a cauſe, or reaſon, why it ſhould be ſo with them. And others are exceſſively aſtoniſhed with the ſhadows of their own thoughts, upon the meaneſt pretences imaginable.

That this is the work of Satan, doth appear by unqueſtionable evidence. This was that *evil Spirit* which God ſent between *Abimelech*, and the Men of *Sechem*, *Judg.* 9. 23. God permitted Satan (for the Puniſhment of them both) to raiſe Fears and Jealouſies in the Heart of *Abimelech*, againſt the Men of *Sechem*, and in the Hearts of the Men of *Sechem* againſt *Abimelech*. They were mutually afraid of one another, and theſe Fears *wrought ſo far*, that they were (for the prevention of a ſuppoſed danger) engaged in *Treacherous Conſpiracies*, to the real Ruine of them both. The *evil Spirit that vexed Saul*, 1 Sam. 16. 14. was nothing elſe but ſudden and vehement *fits of Terrour*, and inward fear which the Devil raiſed by the working up of his Melancholy. For we may obſerve theſe Fits were allayed by *Muſick*; and alſo we might ſee by his diſpoſition *out of his fits*, and by his carriage *in them*,

that *inward fears* were his *tormentors*: for 1 *Sam.* 18.9. 'tis noted, that *Saul eyed David*, that is, his jealous fears began to work concerning *David*, of whom 'tis said expresly, ver. 12. *that he was afraid because the Lord was with him*; and when the evil Spirit came upon him, his heart was exercised with these fears, and accordingly he behaved himself when he cast the Javelin at *David* with a purpose to slay him. Upon any occasion, of trouble especially, the Devil was at hand to heighten his affrightment, insomuch that when the supposed *Samuel* told him of his Death, 1 *Sam.* 28. 20. he was afraid to such an height, that *he fell straightway all along on the Earth, and there was no strength in him.* Neither must we suppose that Satan in this kind of working, is confined only to wicked Men: for there is nothing in this manner of affrightment, which is inconsistent with the condition of a Child of God, especially when God gives him up to tryal, or correction. Nay, many of Gods Servants suffer under Satans hand in this very manner. Let us consider the troubles of *Job*, and we shall find that though Satan endeavoured to destroy his peace by discomposure of Spirit, by questioning his integrity, by frightful injections of blasphemous thoughts, yet all these he vanquished with an undaunted courage, the Blasphemy he rejected with abhorrency, his integrity he resolved he would not deny so long as he lived, his losses he digested easily with a sober composed mind, blessed God that gives and takes at pleasure, and yet he complains of his fears, and his frequent surprisals thereby, insomuch that his friends take notice that most of his trouble arose from thence; Job 22. 10. *a sudden fear troubleth thee*, and he himself confesseth as much, Job 9. 34. *let not his fear terrify me,——but it is not so with me.* So that it appears that *Job*'s inward distress, was mostly from strong impressions of affrighting fears.

These fears impressed upon the Mind, must needs be an unexpressible trouble, there is nothing that doth more loosen the Sinews and Joynts of the Soul, to the weakening and utter enfeebling of it in all its endeavours, than fears; it scatters the strength in a moment. And besides the present burthen, which will bow down the backs of the strongest, these fears have a special kind of *envious magnanimity* in them: For 1. they come by fits, and have times of more fierce and *cruel assaults*, yet in their intervals they leave the Heart in a *trembling fainting* posture, (for the Devil gives not over the present fit, till he hath *rent* them sore, and left them

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(as he did the Mans Son in *Mark 9. 26.*) *as one dead*): So that 'tis no more to be reckoned compassion, and gentleness in Satan toward the afflicted that their fits are not *constant*, than it can be accounted tenderness or kindness in a Tyrant, who when he hath racked or tormented a Man as much as strength will bear without killing out of hand, gives over for a time, that the party might be reserved for *new torments*. 2. These fits usually return at *such* times as the Party afflicted seems to promise himself some *little ease*, being designed to give the greater disappointment, in intercepting his expected comforts. *Sleep* and *Meat* are the two great refreshments of the distressed, these times Satan watcheth for his new onsets. *Job* found it so in both cases, his Meal-times were times of trouble; Job 3. 24. *My sighing cometh* (that is the fits of sighing return) *before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the Waters*; and his Sleeping times were no better, Job 7. 13. *When I say my Bed shall comfort me, my Couch shall ease my complaint: then thou scarest me with Dreams, and terrifiest me through Visions, so that my Soul chuseth strangling and Death, rather than Life.*—— 3. These fears do make them feel the weight, not only of *real* present evils, but of all others which the *imagination* can represent to them. So that the sight or hearing of any sad thing, afflicts them with surmises, that this will be their case. Hence are they full of misgiving thoughts; sometimes they fear that they shall at last fall off from God, into some scandalous Sin, to the dishonour of God and Religion, as that they shall be Apostates, and turn openly prophane; sometimes they fear they shall meet with some signal devouring Judgment, by which they shall one day perish; as *David* said in the like case, *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*: thus are they crucified betwixt their present burthen, and future expectations of evil.

6. The last (and indeed the meanest) Engine for the working of affrightment, is *scrupulosity of Conscience*. Satan vexeth the Conscience and distracteth the Mind, by raising up *needless, groundless* fears concerning a Mans Practice. Where the *ignorance* of Men, or their *timerous* dispositions do encourage Satan to this enterprize, there he multiplies scruples upon them, so that though they assent to the doing of any thing as good or lawful, yet are they constantly affrighted from it, by a suspitious fear that it may be otherwise.

This kind of trouble takes in almost all kind of actions, it ex-

extends to the way of a Mans *Calling*, the way of his management of it, the rates he takes, and the prices he gives for his Commodities; our every *natural* actions of Sleeping, Eating, Drinking, Company, Recreation, are not unconcerned. In all which the Devil affrights the timerous Conscience that (it may be) he hath offended: if he buys or sells, he is disquieted with [*a may be*] that he hath sold too dear, or bought too cheap; if he eats or sleeps, he fears he hath been excessive, a Sluggard or a Glutton: thus are some Men molested in every thing they do.

Neither is this kind of affrightment to be despised: for though often 'tis a groundless fear, and so appears to be to discerning Christians; yet those that are under this molestation think it bad enough: Though it be not as a *Rack* that afflicts with violent pains, yet 'tis as those kinds of *punishments* which at first are nothing, but by continuance do tire Men out with *little-ease*, and so at last become intollerable. Besides this is a *multiplying* trouble; for one scruple begets another, and by *continuance* of scrupling, the Conscience grows *so weak* and unsteady, that *every* thing is scrupled, and the Man brought to a continual affrightment of doing wrong in every action. Neither can all Men make use of the *remedy* that is prescribed for the cure of this Distemper, which is, That when such scruples cannot be removed by *Reason*, then either Men should forbear the *thinking* upon such things from whence scruples are apt to arise, or they should *break* them down by violence, and go over the Belly of their scruple to the performance of their action. I deny not but that something may be done and endeavoured this way; But any may see that 'tis not easy for every one to do either of these: so that this is also a troublesome evil, from which 'tis not easy to be discharged.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Satan's third way to hinder Peace by Spiritual Sadneſs. Wherein, 1. *Of the Degrees of Spiritual Sadneſs.* 2. *Of the frequency of this trouble, evidenced ſeveral ways. Of the difference 'twixt God and Satan in wounding the Conſcience.* 3. *Of the ſolemn Occaſions of this Trouble.* 4. *The Engines by which Satan works ſpiritual ſadneſs.* 1. *His Sophiſtry. His Topicks enumerated and explained.* 1. *Scriptures Perverted.* 2. *Falſe Notions.* 3. *Miſrepreſentations of God.* 4. *Sins; how he aggravates them.* 5. *Leſſening their Graces: How he doth that.* 2. *His ſecond Engine, Fear; how he forwards his deſign that way.*

BEſides the troubles already mentioned under the heads of *diſcompoſures* of Spirit, and *affrightments*, there is a third kind of trouble which Satan gives to the Children of God, and this may for diſtinction ſake, be called *Spiritual Sadneſs*. Theſe Spiritual Sadneſſes *are troubles raiſed in the Mind, relating to the Conſcience, and Spiritual State or Condition of Men.* They differ exceedingly from the two former ſorts of trouble: for, 1. Theſe troubles wholly concern the Conſcience in point of *Regeneration*, and Men's *ſuitableneſs* thereunto; whereas ſimple diſcompoſures of Spirit firſtly relate to *outward* things. 2. In theſe the Conſcience is *immediately* concerned, but in other troubles, the Conſcience is either wholly *untouched*, or wounded only *ſecondarily*, by continuance and progreſs of the diſcompoſure of the Spirit. 3. In theſe troubles, Conſcience is the great *inſtrument* by which the Devil works, whereas in the trouble of affrightments the Devil acted *alone*, the Heart being in the mean time, *uncomplyant* and reſiſting. For the opening of this trouble, I ſhall explain,

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The several *degrees* thereof. 'Tis a trouble of Conscience unduly aggravated by Satan, wherein he confines himself to the *operations* of Conscience. But then, as he suggests the troubles of Men by the *voice* of Conscience, so he doth all he can to make it *irregular* in its actings, and *excessive* in that irregularity. So that in this case, the Conscience is *evil*, and imploys it self in that mistake, to enquire into Mens Regeneracy or Holiness, always being either a *Neuter*, or an *Adversary*, and the Devil helps this forward all he can.

The Apostle in *Heb.* 10.22. makes mention of an *evil Conscience*, and that chiefly as it doth occasion fear, hindering our comfortable access to God. This the Conscience doth when it doth not execute its office aright, either in *not excusing* when it ought, or in *accusing* when it should not; and these false accusations cause different sorts of troubles according to the variety of the matter for which it doth condemn. Hence is it that there are *three degrees* of trouble of Conscience, below the trouble of dispair:

1. The *lowest* degree is when a regenerate Person doth not *positively* determine the case of his Soul, whether he be Regenerate or not, but is only kept in *suspence* betwixt Hope that he is, and Fear that he is not, the Conscience in the mean time forbearing to witness for him, though it have just cause to excuse him: This we may call a *doubting* or questioning Conscience; and though it comes far short of these distresses in which some Men are plunged upon the account of their Souls, yet is it a trouble, for their Peace is hereby hindred, and their desires of satisfaction frustrated, which in matters of so great concern (as are these of Everlasting Life, and Everlasting Misery) must be very disquieting. When the Affections are earnest, their satisfaction cannot be delayed without trouble; for *Hope deferred makes the Heart sick*, Prov. 13.12. not only doth it *faint* under its doubts, but is by that means so *weak* in its Purposes that it is easily drawn to admit of greater Inconveniencies, which may lay the foundation of more perplexing disturbances.

That the Conscience may be in such a Distemper, that it will not witness *for a Man*, when yet it cannot witness *against him*, is the observation of those that have treated of the nature of Conscience: Sometimes it will not make *application* of God's Promises, though it will believe, that he that forsakes Sin is regenerate, that he that truly repents shall be pardoned, yet it will not

Ames Case Consc. lib. 1. c. 9

not *affirm* for a Man, that he forsakes Sin or repents, though he really do so; or if it cannot deny that, yet it will sometimes refuse to make that conclusion which one would think would follow of it self, by natural consequence, and so refuseth to judge the Person regenerate or pardoned, though it cannot deny but that he forsakes Sin and repents. The *greatness* of the Blessing, the *remainders* of Unbelief, the deep *sense* of Unworthiness, with other considerations, do keep off the Heart from making (as I may say) *so bold* with the Promises; but all this while the Devil is doing his utmost to aggravate these considerations, afrighting the Conscience from that just absolution which it ought to give.

2. Another degree of Trouble arising from an evil Conscience, is when the *condition* of a Regenerate Person is determined by Conscience (but falsly) to be *very bad*. I must here (as some others have done) for want of better terms distinguish betwixt the *state* of Regeneracy, and a Mans *condition* in that state, though the words [*state and condition*] are used promiscuously the one for another. A Man may be in a *Regenerate state*,and yet his condition in *that state* may be very bad and blame-worthy, as not walking worthy of so holy a Calling; as a Person may be a Man, and yet unhealthy or languishing. Thus many of the *Asian* Churches were *true* Churches,and yet in a *bad* condition; some *lukewarm*; some *had a name to live, and yet were* comparatively *dead*, because *their works* were not full or *perfect before God*; and others had *left their first* love. To this purpose is that of the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. *Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be Reproabates?* where the word *Reprobate* is not to be taken in the strict severe sense for one *not elected*, but for one whose conversation is not *so sound* and approved as it should be: for this relates not to their *being in Christ*, but to their *assurance* of being in that state, which the Apostle affirms they might know, except the fault lay in their negligent careless conversation.

Dickson Therap. Sacra. *lib.* 3. *c.* 1.

εἰ μήτι ἀδόκιμοί ἐστε.

This kind of Trouble then is of this nature: the Conscience doth not accuse a Man to be *Unregenerate*, yet it condemns him for a carriage *unsuitable* to the Gospel; and this sometimes when his Actions are not *absolutely* evil, but partly good, partly bad: When the Conscience condemns the Actions as altogether sinful, because of some *mixture* of Infirmities, in which case we should imitate the Apostle, in *Rom.* 7. who when by reason of the remainders of Sin in him, he *could not* do the good *he would*, that

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is in *such a manner* and degree as he desired, nor *avoid* the evil which he would so *clearly* and fully as he wished, some imperfections in his best endeavours still cleaving to him: yet his Conscience took a right course, he was humbled for his imperfections, but withal acquits himself in point of integrity, his Conscience testified, ver. 16. that he *consented to the Law as good*, and ver. 22. that he *delighted in the Law of God after the inward Man*. But in this case of Spiritual trouble, the Conscience takes all in the worst sence, it only fixeth upon the *imperfections*, and makes them to serve for proofs against the Sincerity. Thus if a Man in praying be troubled with *wandering* thoughts, then a distempered Conscience condemns that Prayer as a sinful prophanation of the name of God: if the great concern of *God's Glory* run along in such a way, as is also advantagious to the *Person* in outward things, then will such a Conscience condemn the Man for *self-seeking*, though his *main design* were truly the honour of God. In all actions where there is *infirmity* appearing with the most *serious* endeavours, or where *God's Glory* and *Man's Good* are twisted together, the disordered Conscience will be apt to take part with Satan, accusing and condemning the action. Yea very often when the actions are *very good*, no way justly reprovable, the Conscience shall condemn: if he have had peace, he shall be judged for security; if he have Faith in God's promises, it will call it presumption; if he have a zeal for God, it will be misinterpreted for carnal rigour; if he have joy, it shall be misjudged to be natural chearfulness, or delusion; in a word, all his *Graces* shall be esteemed no better than *moral Vertues*. At this rate are the Children of God put to great trouble, *losing* (as I may say) *the things they have wrought*, sadly bemoaning their hardness of heart, or want of Faith and Love, when in their carriage and complainings, they give very *high proofs* of all. In this also Satan is busy to nourish the Conscience in its Jealousies, and doth suggest many objections to confirm it in its Distemper. The Conscience is not always of a peevish or perverse humour; for sometimes it will smite a Man for a miscarriage (as it did to *David* when he cut off the lap of *Saul*'s Garment) and yet not break his peace: which is a sufficient evidence that it is put (in this case) far out of order; which advantage Satan works upon to disquiet the heart, to make Men unthankful for the Mercies they have received, and to incapacitate them for more. This for distinction sake, we may call the trouble of *a grieved or*

dejected

dejected Conscience, according to that of Psal. 42. 5, 11. *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?* Though such Men are under God's Favour, yet they misdeem it, and think God is angry with them, their Heart pants, their Soul thirsts, their Tears are their Meat, they are ready to say unto God, *My rock, why hast thou forsaken me?* And though they have some hopes for the future, that God *will command his loving kindness*, and that they *shall yet praise him*; yet their present apprehension of their Spiritual wants and weaknesses, and of the displeasure of God, which they suppose they are under, makes them go mourning all the Day.

3. The third degree of trouble of Conscience is when the Conscience peremptorily denies the *state of Regeneration*. Hereby a Man that is really regenerate, is concluded to be yet *in the Gall of bitterness, and bond of Iniquity*; his former hopes are taxed for *self-delusion*, and his present state to be a state of Nature. This trouble is far greater than the two former; because the Party is judged to be in *greater hazard*, and by many degrees more remote *from hope*. 'Tis the frequent and sad thought of such, That if Death should in that estate cut off their days, Oh! then they were for ever miserable. The fears and disquiets of the Heart on this account, are very grievous, but yet they admit of *degrees*, according to the *Ignorance* of the Party, the *Distemper* of the Conscience, the *Strength* of the Objections, or *Severity* of the Prosecution, in regard the Conscience is now sadly out of order. We may call this degree of grief (for distinction) *a wounded Spirit*; which how hard it is to be born *Solomon* tells us, *Prov.* 18. 14. By comparing it with all other kind of troubles, which the *Spirit of a Man* can make some shift to *bear*, making this heavier than all, and above ordinary strength.

Some make *enquiry* what may be the difference betwixt a wounded Spirit, in the *Regenerate* and the *Reprobate?* To which it may be *answered*, 1. That in the Parties apprehension there is no difference at all: both of them may be compassed about with the *Sorrows of Death*, and suppose themselves to be in the *Belly of Hell*. 2. Neither is there any difference in the *degree* of the trouble, a Child of God may be handled with as much seeming *Severity*, as he whom God intends for a future *Tophet*. 3. Neither is there any such remarkable difference in the *working* of the Spirits of the one and other, that *they* themselves at present, or *others* that are

by-standers, can *easily* observe. Yet a formal difference there is, for Grace being in the Heart of the one, will in some *breathing* or *Pulse* discover its Life. And though sometimes it acts so low, or confusedly, that *God only* can distinguish; yet often those that are *experienced* observers will discover some real Breathings after God, and true loathing of Sin, and other traces of Faith and Love, that are not so discernible to the Parties themselves. 4. But in God's *design* the difference is very great: the wicked lye under his Lash as *Malefactors*, but the regenerate are as Patients *under Cure*, or Children *under Discipline*. 5. And accordingly the *Issue* doth determine, that Gods intention in wounding their Spirits were not alike to both; the one at last, coming out of the Furnace as *Gold*, the other still remaining as *reprobate Silver*, or being consumed as dross. Thus have ye seen the nature and degree of Spiritual Sadness.

2. For the further explanation whereof I shall next shew you that this is an *usual* trouble to the Children of God.

Which, 1. I might evidence from several *Instances* of those that have suffered much under it: as *David*, whose complaints in this case are very frequent; and *Heman*, who left a memorial of his griefs in *Psal.* 88. *Jonah* also in the Belly of the Whale, had a sharp fit of it, when he concluded that he was *cast out of Gods Sight*, and his *Soul fainted* within him, *Jon.* 2. 4, 7. Neither did *Hezekiah* altogether escape it, for though his disquiet began upon another ground, it run him into Spiritual trouble at last. But besides these, innumerable instances occur. One shall scarce converse with any Society of Christians, but he shall meet with some, who with sad complaints shall bemoan the burthen of their Hearts, and the troubles of their Conscience.

2. The *provisions* which God hath made in his Word for such, is an evidence that such Distempers are *frequent*. He that in a City shall observe the Shops of the Apothecaries, and there take notice of the great variety of Medicines, Pots and Glasses full of Mixtures, Confection and Cordials: may from thence rationally conclude, that 'tis a frequent thing for Men to be Sick, though he should not converse with any Sick Person for his information. Thus may we be satisfied from the Declarations, Directions, and Consolations of Scripture, that 'tis a common case for the Children of God to stand in need of Spiritual Physitians, and Spiritual Remedies to help them, when they are wounded and fainting.

Solo-

Solomon's exclamation, *a wounded Spirit who can bare?* shews that the Spirit is sometimes wounded. The Prophets direction, *he that walks in darkness and sees no Light, let him trust in the Lord,* clearly implies that some there are that walk in darkness. God's creating the *fruit of the Lips, Peace, peace*; his promises of restoring *Comforts to Mourners*; his commands to others to comfort them; do all inform us, that 'tis a common thing for his Children to be under such Sadnesses of Spirit, that all this is necessary for their relief.

3. The *reasons* of this trouble, do also assure us of the frequency of it: for of them we may say (as Christ speaks of the poor) *we have them always with us*; so that the grounds of Spiritual Sadness considered, 'tis no wonder to find many Men complaining under this Distemper. The reasons are,

1. The *Malice* of Satan, who hath no greater revenge against a Child of God, when translated from the Power of Darkness to the Kingdom of Christ, than to hinder him of the Peace and Comfort of that condition.

2. The many *advantages* which Satan hath against us. For the effecting of this, we cannot imagine that one so malicious as he is, will suffer his Malice to sleep, when so many fair opportunities of putting it in practice do offer themselves. For 1. The *Questions* to be determined for setling the peace of the Soul, are very *intricate*, and often of greater difficulty than *Doctrinal* Controversies. How hard is it to conclude, what is the *Minimum quod sic*; the lowest degrees of true Grace? Or the *Maximum quod sic*; the highest degree of sin, consistant with true Grace? To distinguish betwixt a Child of God at the *lowest*, and an Hypocrite, or Temporary Believer at the *highest*, is difficult. In *mixt* actions, to be able to shew how the Soul doth manage its respect *to God*, when the Man hath also a respect to *himself*, especially when it is under any *confusion*, is not easie. And in these Actions where the difference from others of like kind, lies only in the *grounds* and *motives* of the undertaking, or where the *prevailing degree* must distinguish the Act, in reference to *different* Objects that are *subordinate* to one another (as our loving God above the World, or our selves, our fearing God above Men, *&c.*) 'tis not every one that can give a satisfactory determination. 2. As the intricacies of the Doubts to be resolved, give the Devil an advantage to puzzle us; so is the advantage heightned exceedingly by the great *injudiciousness*,

ciousness, and unskilfulness of the greatest part of Christians. These Questions are in their *notion* difficult, more difficult in their *application* to particular Persons, (where the ablest Christian may easily be non-plust) but most difficult to the *weak* Christians: These Satan can baffle with every poor Objection, and impose what he will upon them. 3. Especially having the advantage of the working *guilt* of Conscience, which he can readily stir up, to present to a Mans *remembrance* all his failings and miscarriages, of what nature soever. And when Guilt rageth in an unskilful Heart, it must needs create great disquiet. 4. But most of all when our *natural fears are awakened:* As when a Man hath been under any great Conviction, though he be cured of his Trouble, yet it usually leaves a weakness in the part, (as Bruises and Maims do in any Member of the Body) which at the change of Weather, or other accidental hurt, will renew their old Trouble; and then, when fresh Guilt begins to press hard upon the Conscience, not only do the broken Bones ake, by the *reviving* of former fears: But the impressions of his old suspitions, bad conceit of himself, and jealousies of the deceitfulness of his Heart, which had then fixed themselves by a deep rooting, do now make him *most fearful* of entertaining any *good thought* of himself. So that if any consideration tending to his support be offered, he dare not come near it, suspecting his greatest danger to lie *on that hand*. These advantages considered, we should not think it strange that any Child of God is driven to Spiritual Sadness (as some do) but may rather wonder that this is not the common condition of all Christians.

3. Another reason that must be assigned for these Troubles, is *Divine Dispensation*; such are his Children, some so Careless, others Proud, others Stubborn, many Presumptuous, that God is forced to correct them by this piece of *Discipline*, and to cure them by casting them into a Feaver. Others of his Children he thus Exerciseth for *other ends*, sometimes to take occasion there-from, of making larger *discoveries* of his Love; sometimes thereby *preventing* them from falling under some grievous Miscarriage, or for the *tryal* and exercises of their Graces. We may observe accordingly, that there are *three* sorts of Men that usually have Exercises of this kind.

1. Those who at their Conversion, are either *Ignorant*, *Melancholy*, or were *grosly Scandalous*, are usually brought through with great

great fear and sadness. And this is so observable, that (by the mistake of Men) it is made a general Rule, that none are Converted, but they are under great and frightful apprehensions of Wrath, and dismal Terrors. This indeed is true of some, but these ordinarily are the Scandalous, Melancholy, and Ignorant sort, (though sometimes God may deal so with others, for who can limit him?) Yet are there many, whose Education hath been good, and their Instruction aforehand great, whose Conversion is so *gradual* and insensible, that they are strangers to these troubles of Conscience; and profess that if these *heights* of fear be necessary to Conversion, they must be at a *loss*, neither can they give an account of the *time* of their Conversion as others may.

2. Those whose Conversion was easie, when after their Conversion they *miscarry* by any *great* Iniquity, they meet with as great a measure of Terrour and Fear (and some think far greater) as those whose new Birth was more difficult. *David*'s greatest troubles of Soul came upon him after he began to appear more publick in the World; for then he met with many *Temptations*, and great *Occasions* for God's exercising his Discipline over him. I believe, when he kept his Fathers Sheep, his Songs had *more* of Praises, and *less* of Complainings than afterward. It is the Opinion of some, that God's dealing in this kind of Dispensation, even when miscarriage is not the cause, is more sharp usually to those, whose Conversion hath been most easie.

3. There is another sort of Men, to whom God vouchsafes, but *seldom* and *short* fits of Spiritual Joy, as *breathing times*, betwixt sharp fits of Soul-trouble, for necessary refreshment and recovery of strength; but the *constant course* which God holds with them, is to *exercise* them under fears while he hides his Face from them, and suffers Satan to vex them, by urging his Objections against their holiness and integrity. *Heman* was one of this Rank, and the *great* Instance which God hath given in his Word, for the support of others that may be in the same case. For he testifies *Psal.* 88. that he suffered the *Terrours* of God almost to *destraction*, and this from *his Youth up*. 'Tis not fit for us too narrowly to question, why God doth thus to his Children, seeing his *Judgments are unsearchable*, and his *ways past finding out*; but we may be sure, that God sees this dealing to be most fit for those that are exercised therewith; it may be, to keep Pride from them, or to prevent them from falling into some greater inconvenience or

ſin: Unto which, he takes notice of a more than ordinary *proneneſs* in their diſpoſition, or for the benefit of others who may thereby take notice, what *an evil and bitter thing it is* to ſin againſt God, and what a malicious Adverſary they have to deal with. Whoſo ſhall conſider theſe reaſons of Spiritual Sadneſs, muſt needs confeſs, that (ſeeing the *advantages* which Men give to a malicious Devil to vex their Conſciences are ſo many and great, and the *weakneſs* of Gods Children ſo hazardous, for the prevention whereof, a wiſe careful Father will neceſſarily be engaged to exerciſe his Diſcipline) it cannot be expected, but that Spiritual Troubles ſhould be very frequent among the Servants of God

Queſt. Here it is requiſite that I give ſatisfaction to this *Query*. Seeing that *God* doth ſometime *wound* the Conſciences of his Children, and that *Satan* alſo *wounds* them, what are the *differences* betwixt God and Satan, in inflicting theſe Wounds?

Anſw. For the right underſtanding of this Queſtion, I ſhall propound *two* things:

1. That it is a truth, that *God* doth ſometimes *wound* the Conſciences of his Children; and this, 1. *Before* Converſion: but in *order* to it, as preparatory to that change, Men are then in their ſins, walking in the vanity of their minds. To *tranſlate* them from this eſtate, he awakens the Conſcience, ſhews them their Iniquities, and the danger of them, that at preſent they are *in their Blood, Children of wrath, as well as others*, and that without Chriſt they are miſerable; the effect of this muſt needs be *ſerious* Conſideration, deep thoughts of Heart with ſome *trouble*, only as to the *meaſure* and degree there is great *difference*: God doth not in the particular application of theſe things to the Conſcience, tie up himſelf exactly to the ſame *manner* and *meaſure* of proceeding, though he keep ſtill to his *general Method*. Hence is it, that ſome (in regard of Gods gentle *leaſurely* dealing, and the frequent *interpoſure* of Incouragements) are (if compared with the caſe of others) ſaid to be *allured*, and *drawn with Cords of Love*: But others have a remarkable meaſure of trouble, ſharp fits of Fear and Anguiſh; and thoſe moſt commonly are ſuch, whoſe Converſion is more *quick*, and the Change viſible from one *extream* to *another*, (as *Paul*, when Converted in the midſt of his Perſecuting rage) or thoſe whoſe *Ignorance*, or *Melancholy*, makes their Hopes and Comforts inacceſſible for the preſent. Theſe

troubles

troubles God *owns* to be the Work of his Spirit: the same Spirit which is a *Spirit of Adoption* to the Converted, is a *Spirit of Bondage* to these, *Rom.* 8. 16. And accordingly we find, it was so to the Converts, in *Acts* 2. Who being *pricked in their hearts* by *Peter's* Sermon, *cried out*, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* The like did the *Jaylor*. And the Promise which God makes of calling the *Jews*, *Zach.* 12. 10. doth express God's purpose of dealing with them in this very Method; *They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him as one that mourneth for his only Son, and shall be in bitterness for him, —— in that day shall be a great mourning.* 2. God also sometimes wounds the Conscience of his Children *after Conversion*, and this he doth to convince and humble them for some Miscarriage, which they become guilty of. As when they grow *secure*, carnally confident of the continuance of their Peace, when they are carelesly *negligent* of Duty, and the exercises of their Graces when they fall into *gross* and scandalous sins, or wilfully *desert* the ways of Truth; and in many more cases of like kind. When his Children make themselves thus obnoxious to Divine Displeasure, then God hides his Face from them, takes away his Spirit, signifies his Anger to their Consciences, threatens them with the danger of that Condition; from whence follows grief and fear in the Hearts of his People. In this manner God expressed his Displeasure to *David*, as his Complaints in *Psal.* 51. do testifie: *Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the Bones which thou hast broken may rejoyce; hide thy Face from my sins.—— Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy Salvation*, &c.

Vid. Goodwin *Child of Light*.

2. Notwithstanding all this, there is a *great difference* betwixt God and Satan in this matter, which mainly appears in *two* things. 1. God doth *limit* himself in all the Trouble which he gives his Children, to his great *end* of doing them Good, and Healing them, and consequently *stints* himself in the *measure* and *manner* of his Work to such a *proportion*, as his Wisdom sees will exactly suit with his End. So that his Anger is not like the *brawlings* of malicious Persons that know *no bounds*; he will not *always Chide*; his Debates are *in measure*, and this, *lest the Spirit should fail before him*, Isa. 57. 16. So that when he wounds the Conscience before Conversion, 'tis but to bring them to Christ, and to prevent their taking such Courses, as might through Delusion, make

them

them take up their stand short of him. So much of Mourning and Fear as is requisite for the true effecting of this, he appoints for them, and no more. When he wounds after Conversion, 'tis but to let them feel that it is an evil and bitter thing to sin against him, that their Godly *sorrow* may work *Repentance* suitable to the Offence; and that they may be sufficiently cautioned for the time to come, to *sin no more, lest a worse thing befal them.* He that afflicts not willingly, will put no more Grief upon them, than is necessary to bring them to this. But Satan when he is admitted (and God doth often permit him in subservience to his design) to wound the Conscience, he proceeds according to the *boundless fury* of his malice, and plainly manifests that his desire is to *destroy*, and to tread them down, that they may never rise again: This though he cannot effect, (for God will not suffer him to proceed further, than the bringing about his holy and gracious Purpose) yet it hinders not, but that still his envious thoughts boil up in his Breast, and he acts according to his *own Inclination.* For it is with Satan, as 'tis with wicked Men; if God imploy them for the Chastisement of his Children, they consider not *who* sets them on work, nor what *Measures* probably God would have them observe; but they propose to themselves *more work* than ever God cut out for them. As *Assyria*, when imployed against *Jerusalem*, *Isa.* 10. 7. had designs more large and cruel than was in Gods Commission. God had stinted him in his holy Purpose; yet the *Assyrian meant not so, neither did his heart think so, but it was in his heart to destroy and cut off Nations not a few.* So that when God is *a little displeased* (as he speaks, *Zach.* 1. 15.) they do all that lies in them, to help forward the Affliction. Thus doth the Devil endeavour to make all things worse to God's Children, than ever God intended. Here is one difference betwixt God and Satan, in the wounding of Consciences. But, 2. They are yet further differenced, in that all that God doth in this Work, is still *according to Truth.* For if he signifie to the Unconverted that they are in a state of Nature, liable to the Damnation of Hell, unless they accept of Christ for Salvation upon his Terms; this is no more than what is true, God doth not *misrepresent* their Case to them at *that* time. Again, if he express his displeasure to any of his Converted Children, that have grieved his Spirit by their Follies, by setting before them the Threatnings of his Word, or the Examples of his

Wrath; he doth but *truly tell them* that he is angry with them, and that *de jure*, according to the *Rigour* of the Law, and the *demerit* of their Offence, he might justly cast them off: But he doth not *positively* say, that *de eventu*, it shall infallibly be so with them. But Satan in both these cases, goes a great way *further*. He plainly affirms to those that are in the way to Conversion, that God *will not* pardon their Iniquities, that there is *no hope* for them, that Christ *will not* accept them; that he *never intended* the benefit of his Sufferings for them. And when the Converted do provoke God, he sticks not to say, the Breach *cannot* be healed, and that they *are not* yet Converted. All which are most *false* assertions. And though God can *make use* of Satans malice, when he abuseth his Children with his *falshoods* to their great fear, to carry on his own ends by it, and to give a *greater* impression to what he *truly* witnesseth against them: Yet is not God the *proper Author* of Satans lying, for he doth it *of his own* wicked inclination. The *effect* of these desperate false Conclusions (which is the putting his Children into a fear, in order to his end) may be ascribed to God; but the *falshood* of these Conclusions are *formally* Satan's work, and not God's. For he makes use of so much of Satan's *wrath* as may be to his *Praise*, and the *remainder of* his *wrath* he doth *restrain*.

I have discovered the *nature* and degrees of these Spiritual Troubles, and that 'tis a common thing for the Children of God to fall under them. For the further opening of them, I shall next discover.

3. The usual *solemn occasions*, that do as it were invite Satan, to give his onset against God's Children, and they are principally these *Six*.

1. The *time of Conversion:* He delights to set on them when they are in the straits of a new Birth, for then the Conscience is *awakned*, the danger of Sin *truly* represented, *fear* and *sorrow* (in some degree) necessary and unavoidable. At this time he can easily *overdrive* them. Where the Convictions are *deep* and *sharp*, ready to weigh them down, a *few Grains* more cast into the Scale, will make the Trouble (as *Job* speaks) *heavier than the Sand*; and where they are more easie, or gentle, yet the Soul being *unsetled*, the thoughts in commotion, they are disposed to receive a *strong* impression, and to be turned (*as Wax to the Seal*) into a mould of *Hopelesness* and Desperation. That this is one of

Satans special occasions, we need no other evidence for satisfaction, than the common experience of Converts; many of them do *hardly escape* the danger, and after their difficult Conquest of the troubles of their Heart (which at that time are extraordinarily enlarged) *do witness*, that they are assaulted with desperate fears, that their sins were *unpardonable*, and sad conclusions against any *expectation* of favour from the Lord their God. These thoughts we are sure, the Spirit of God *will not* bear witness unto because *false*, and therefore we must leave them at Satans door.

2. Another occasion which Satan makes use of, is the time of *solemn Repentance* for some *great sin* committed *after* Conversion. Sometimes God's Children fall, to the breaking of their Bones. What great Iniquities they may commit through the force of Temptation, I need not mention. The Adultery and Murther of *David*; the Incest of the *Corinthian*; *Peters* denial of Christ, with other sad Instances, in the Records of the Scriptures, do speak enough of that. These sins (considering their hainousness, the scandal of Religion, the dishonour of God, the grieving of his Spirit, the condition of the Party offending against Love, Knowledg and the various Helps which God affords them to the contrary, with other aggravating Circumstances) being very displeasing to God, their Consciences at least, (either *compelled* to Examination *by God immediately*, or *mediately* by some great *Affliction*, or *voluntarily* awakening to a serious consideration of what hath been done, by the working of its *own Light*, assisted thereunto by quickning Grace, 1 *Cor.* 11.31, 32.) call them to a strict account; thence follow *Fear*, *Shame*, *Self-Indignation*, *bitter Weeping*, *deep Humiliation*; then comes Satan, he rakes their Wounds, and by his Aggravations makes them smart the more: He pours in *Corrosives* instead of Oyl, and all to make them believe, that *their Spot is not the Spot of Gods Children*; that their Back-slidings cannot be healed. An occasion it is, as suitable to his Malice as he could wish; for ordinarily God doth *severely* testifie his Anger to them, and doth not *easily* admit them again to the *sence* of his Favour. At which time, the Adversary is very busie to work up their Hearts to an *excess* of Fear and Sorrow. This was the course which he took with the Incestuous *Corinthian*, taking advantage of his great Transgressions, to *overwhelm him with too much Sorrow*, 2 Cor. 2.7, 11.

3. Satan

3. Satan watcheth the *discomposures* of the Spirits of God's Children, under some grievous *Cross* or *Affliction*. This occasion also falls fit for his design of wounding the Conscience; when the Hand of the Lord is *lifted up* against them, and their thoughts *disordered* by the stroke, suggesting at that time God's *Anger* to them and their *sins*; he can easily frame an Argument from these Grounds, That they are not reconciled to God, and that they are dealt withal as Enemies. *David* seldom met with outward trouble, but he at the same time had a Conflict with Satan about his spiritual condition, or state, as his frequent deprecations of Divine Wrath, at such times do testifie; *Lord, rebuke me not in thy Wrath*, &c. There is indeed but a step betwixt discomposure of Spirit, and Spiritual Troubles; as hath been proved before.

4. When Satan hath *prepared* the Hearts of God's Children by *Atheistical*, or *Blasphemous* thoughts, he takes that occasion to *deny* their Grace and Interest in Christ. And the Argument *at that time*, seems unanswerable. Can Christ lodg in an Heart so full of horrid Blasphemies against him? Is it possible it should be Washed and Sanctified, when it produceth such filthy cursed thoughts? All the troubles of Affrightment (of which before) are improveable to this purpose.

5. Another spiritual occasion for Spiritual Trouble, is *Melancholy*; few Persons distempered therewith, do escape Satans hands, at one time or other, he casts his Net over them, and seeks to stab them with his Weapon. *Melancholy* indeed affords so *many* advantages to him, and those so *answerable* to his design, that it is no wonder if he make much of it. For, 1. Melancholy affects both *Head* and *Heart*, it affords both *Fear* and *Sadness*, and *deformed*, *misshapen*, *delirous* imaginations to work upon; than which, nothing can be more for his purpose. For where the Heart *trembles*, and the Head is *darkned*, there every Object is misrepresented; the *Ideas* of the Brain are *monstrous* appearances, reflected from *opake* and *dark* Spirits, so that Satan hath no more to do, but to suggest the new matter of Fear. For that Question, *Whether the Man be Converted*, &c. being once started, to a mind already distempered with Fear, must of it self (it being a business of so high a nature) without Satan's further pursuit, summon the utmost powers of sadness and misreprehension, to raise a Storm. 2. Besides, the *impressions* of Melancholy are always *strong*, it is

Willis de anima Brut. *cap. 9.* de Melancholia.

ſtrong in its *fears*, (or elſe Men would never be tempted to *deſtroy* themſelves); it is ſtrong in its *miſtakes* (or elſe they could never perſwade themſelves of the truth of *fooliſh*, *abſurd*, and *impoſſible* Fancies); as that of *Nebuchadnezzar*, who by a deluſive apprehenſion, believing himſelf to be *a Beaſt*, forſook the company of Men, and betook to the Fields to eat Graſs with Oxen. The imaginations of the Melancholick are *never idle*, and yet *ſtraightned*, or confined to a few things; and then the Brain being weakned as to a true and *regular* apprehenſion, it frames nothing but *Bugbears*, and yet with the higheſt confidence of certainty. 3. Theſe impreſſions are uſually *laſting*, not vaniſhing as an *early Dew*, but they continue for Months and Years. 4. And yet they have only *ſo much* underſtanding left them, as ſerves to nouriſh their fears. If their underſtanding had been *quite* gone, their fears would vaniſh with them: As the Flame is extinguiſhed for want of Air: but they have only *knowledg* to let them *ſee* their miſery, and *ſence* to make them *apprehenſive* of their pain. And therefore will they *pray* with floods of *Tears*, unexpreſſible *Groanings*, deepeſt *Sighing*, and *trembling* Joynts, to be *delivered* from their fears. 5. They are alſo apt after eaſe of their troubles, to have *frequent returns*: What diſpoſition (all theſe things being conſidered) can be more exactly ſhaped to ſerve Satans turn? If he would have Men to believe *the worſt* of themſelves, he hath ſuch imaginations to work upon, as are already miſhapen into a *deformity* of evil ſurmiſing. Would he *terrifie* by Fears, or *diſtreſs* by Sadneſs? he hath that already; and 'tis but *altering the Object* (which oftentimes needs not, for naturally the ſerious Melancholick imploys all his Griefs upon his ſuppoſed miſerable eſtate of Soul) and then he hath Spiritual diſtreſs. Would he continue them *long* under their ſorrows, or take them upon all occaſions *at his pleaſure*, or act them to a *greater height* than ordinary? Still the Melancholick temper ſuits him. This is ſufficient for caution, that we take ſpecial care of our Bodies for the preventing, or abating of that Humour, by all lawful means, if we would not have the Devil to abuſe us at his will.

Fæl Plateri prox. med. *cap.* 3. de mentis alienatione.

6. *Sickneſs*, or *Death-Bed*, is another ſolemn occaſion, which the Devil ſeldom miſſeth with his will. Death is a ſerious thing, it repreſents the Soul and Eternity *to the Life*. While they are at a diſtance, Men look ſlightly upon theſe, but when they approach near to them, Men uſually have ſuch a ſight of them, as

they never had before. We may truly call Sickneſs and Death-Bed, an *hour of Temptation*, which Satan will make uſe of with the more miſchievous induſtry, becauſe he hath but a *ſhort time* for it. That's the laſt Conflict, and if he miſs that, we are beyond his reach for ever. So that in this caſe Satan incourageth himſelf to the Battel, with *a now, or never*. And hence we find, that it is uſual for the dying Servants of God, to undergo moſt *ſharp* Encounters; then to tell them (when the Soul is about to looſe from the Body) that they are yet in their Blood, without God, and Hope, is enough to affright them into the *extreameſt Agonies*; for they ſee *no time* before them anſwerable to ſo great a *work*, if it be yet to do. And withal, they are under vaſt *diſcouragments* from the wearineſs and pains of Sickneſs, their underſtandings and faculties being alſo dull, and ſtupified; ſo that if at this laſt plunge, God ſhould not extraordinarily appear to rebuke Satan, and to pluck them out of theſe *great Waters* (as he often doth, by the fuller interpoſition of the Light of his Face, and the larger Teſtimony of his Spirit) after their long and comfortable profeſſion of their Faith, and holy Walking, their Light would be *put out in Darkneſs*, and they would *lie down in Sorrow*. Yet this I muſt note, That as deſirous as Satan is to improve this occaſion, he is often remarkably *diſappointed*, and that wherein he (it may be) and we would leaſt expect, I mean in regard of thoſe, who through a timerous Diſpoſition, or *Melancholy*, or upon other Accounts, are (as I may ſo ſay) *all their life-time ſubject to Bondage*; thoſe Men who are uſually exerciſed with *frequent fits* of Spiritual Trouble, when they come to Sickneſs, Death-Bed, and ſome other *ſingular occaſions* of trouble, though we might ſuſpect their fears would *then* be working, if ever; Yet God out of gracious Indulgence to them, (conſidering their *Mould and Faſhion*, or becauſe he would prevent their *extream* fainting, &c.) doth meet them with *larger* Teſtimonies of his Favour, *higher* Joys, more confident ſatisfactions in his Love, than ever they received at any time *before*; and this to their wonder, their high admiration, making the times which they were wont to *fear moſt*, to be times of greateſt *Conſolation*. This Obſervation I have grounded, not upon *one* or *two* Inſtances, but could produce a cloud of Witneſſes for it. Enough it is to check our *forward* fears of a *future* evil day, and to heal us of a ſighing Diſtemper, while we afflict our ſelves with ſuch thoughts as

theſe?

these: *If I have so many fears in Health, how shall I be able to go through the valley of the shadow of Death?*

4. I have one thing more to add, for these discovery of these Spiritual Troubles, and that is to shew you the *Engines* by which Satan works them, and they are these *two*, *Sophistry*, and *Fears*.

1. As to his *Sophistry*, by which he argues the Children of God into a wrong apprehension of themselves, it is very great. He hath a wonderful dexterity in framing Arguments against their Peace, he hath variety of shrewd Objections and subtile Answers, to the usual Replies, by which they seek to beat him off. There is not a *Fallacy* by which a cunning *Sophister* would seek to entangle his Adversary in Disputation, but Satan would make use of it; as I might particularly shew you, if it were proper for a common Auditory. Though he hath so much impudence, as not to blush at the most *silly contemptible* Reason that can be offered; notwithstanding he hath also so much wit as to urge (though never *true*, yet) always *probable* Arguments. How much he can *prevail* upon the beliefs of Men, in cases relating to their *Souls*, may be conjectured by the success he hath upon the *understandings* of Men, when he argues them into *Errour*, and makes them *believe a lye*. We usually say (and that truly) that Satan cannot, in any case, *force* us properly to consent; yet considering the advantages which he takes, and the ways he hath to *prepare* the Hearts of Men for his impressions, and then his very great *subtilty* in disputing, we may say that he can so order the matter, that he will *seldom miss* of his aim. It would be an endless work to gather up all the Arguments that Satan hath made use of, to prove the Condition, or State of God's Children to be bad: But that I may not altogether disappoint your expectations in that thing, I shall present to your view Satan's *usual Topicks*, the *Common-places*, or Heads unto which all his Arguments may be reduced. And they are,

1. *Scripture abused*, and perverted. His way is not only to *suggest* that they are Unregenerate, or under an evil frame of Heart, but to *offer proof* that these Accusations are true. And because he hath to do with them that profess a belief of Scriptures, as the Oracles of God, he will fetch his proofs from thence; telling them that he will evidence what he saith *from Scripture*. Thus sometimes he assaults the weaker unskilful sort of Christians, *Thou art not a Child of God: for they that are so, are Enlightned, translated from*

from Darkness, they are the Children of the Light; but thou art a poor, ignorant, dark, blind Creature, and therefore no Child of God. Sometimes he labours to conclude the like, from the *Infirmities* of God's Children, abusing to this purpose, that of 1 *John* 3. 9. *He that is born of God, doth not commit sin.* And. *He cannot sin, because he is born of God.* Thus he urgeth it, *Can any thing be more plainly and fully asserted? Is not this Scripture? Canst thou deny this?* Then he pursues, *But thou sinnest often, that is thine own complaint against thy self, thy Conscience also bearing witness to the truth of this Accusation; therefore thou canst be no Child of God.* Sometimes he *plays* upon *words* that are used in *divers* senses, (a fit Engine for the Devil to work by) for what is true in one sense, will be false in another; and his arguing is from that which is *true*, to that which is false. I remember one that was long racked with that of *Rev.* 21. 8. *The fearful and unbelieving, &c. shall have their part in the Lake, which burns with Fire and Brimstone.* From whence the Party thus argued: The proposion is *true*, because 'tis Scripture, and I cannot *deny* the Assumption. *Fearful I am, because I am doubtful of Salvation; and unbelieving I am, for I cannot believe that I am Regenerate, or in a state of Grace, and therefore I cannot avoid the Conclusion.* To the same purpose he disputes against some, from 1 *John* 4. 18. *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear;* but, *thou art full of fears therefore thou lovest not God.* Sometimes he makes use of those Scriptures, that make the *prevailing degree* of our love and respects to God, above the World, and the things of this Life, to be the Characters of true Grace; as that of *John*, *If any Man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him:* And that of Christ, *If a Man love any thing more than Me, he is not worthy of Me: he that forsakes not all for Me, cannot be my Disciple, &c.* Then he urgeth upon them their *love* of the World, and *unwillingness* to part with their Estates; and so brings the Conclusion upon them. Instances might be infinite, but by these you may judg of the rest. Let us now cast our Eye upon his *subtilty*, in managing his Arguments against men. 1. He grounds his Arguments *on Scripture*, because that hath *authority* with it, and the very troubled Conscience hath a *reverence* to it. 2. He always *suits* his Scriptures, which he thus cites, to th[illegible] wherein the Conscience is *most tender:* if there be any thi[illegible] that affords matter of *suspition*, or fear, he will be sure t[illegible] such an *Arrow* out of the *Quiver* of Scriptures, as [illegible] directly *hit*

the

the Mark. 3. Though in the citation of Scripture, he always urgeth a ſenſe which the Holy Ghoſt *never* intended: Yet there will be always ſomething in thoſe Scriptures which he makes uſe of, which *in words* at leaſt, ſeem to *favour* his Concluſion; as appears in the Inſtances now given. For when he would conclude a Man not to be a Child of God becauſe of his Ignorance, ſomething of his Argument is true; it may be the Man is ſenſible that his knowledg is but *little*, compared with the meaſures which ſome others have; or that he is at a *loſs*, or *confuſed* in many Doctrinal points of Religion; or hath but *little experience* in many Practical caſes, *&c.* This, as it is true, ſo is it his trouble; and whilſt he is poring upon his defect, Satan claps an *Arreſt* upon him, of a far *greater* Debt than God chargeth upon him, and from Scriptures that ſpeak of a *total ignorance* of the *Fundamentals* of Religion, (as that there is a God, that Chriſt Jeſus is God and Man, the Redeemer of Mankind by a ſatisfaction to Divine Juſtice, *&c.*) Or of a *wilful ignorance* of the *worth* of the proffer of the Goſpel, or its *reality* (which is diſcovered in the *refuſal* of the terms thereof) he concludes him to be in a ſtate of Darkneſs: whereas the Ignorance which the Man *complains* of, is not the Ignorance which thoſe Scriptures *intend.* So in the next Inſtance, the *ſins* which a Child of God complains of, are thoſe of *daily Incurſion*, which he labours and ſtrives againſt; but that *committing ſin* mentioned in the Text, hath reſpect to the *Gnoſticks*, who taught a *liberty* in ſinning, and fancied a *Righteouſneſs* conſiſtant with the *avowed practice* of Iniquity: Hence doth *John*, 1 John 3. 7. *directly* face their Opinion, in theſe terms, *Little Children, let no Man deceive you; he that doth Righteouſneſs is righteous.* And, *He that is born of God neither doth*, nor can, avouch a liberty of *ſinning*; it being contrary to the Principles of the New Nature. So that the *miſcarriages* of Infirmity which the Child of God laments in himſelf, are not the *ſame* with that of the Text, upon which Satan grounds the Accuſation. The like may be ſaid of the third Inſtance, from *Rev.* 21. 18. The threatning there is againſt ſuch a *fear* to loſe the comforts of the World, that they *dare not* believe the Goſpel to be true, and accept it accordingly: which is nothing to thoſe fears and doubtings that may be in a Child of God, in reference to his Happineſs. Thus in all the [illegible] the Fallacy lies in *miſapplying* the Scripture (to ſuit them to that wherein the Conſcience is tender) under a ſenſe

which

which was never intended by them; yet in another ſenſe, the thing charged upon the Conſcience is true. 4. Yet is Satan ſo ſubtile, that when he diſputes by ſuch Fallacious Arguments, he chiefly endeavours to draw off the *Defendants Eye* and conſideration, from that *part* of the Argument wherein its *weakneſs* lies (which in this caſe, is always in the abuſe of the Scripture to a wrong ſenſe); this he doth, partly from the advantage which he hath from the *reverence* that they carry to Scripture, they believe it to be true, and are not willing to *ſuſpect the ſenſe*; and many are ſo weak, that if they ſhould, Satan is ſo cunning that he can eaſily *baffle* them in any diſtinction that they can make. And partly from the *ſenſe* they have of that whereof they are accuſed, they feel themſelves *ſo ſore* in that place, (and for that very end doth Satan direct his Scripture to hit it) that they readily *take it for granted*, that the *hinge* of the Controverſie turns upon it, and that the whole Diſpute reſts upon it. Now Satan having theſe fair advantages, by a further improvement of them, hides the weakneſs of his Argument. For, 1. He takes that ſenſe of the Scripture (in which he miſapplies it) *for granted*, and that with great *confidence*, making as if there were no doubt there. 2. He *turns* always that part of the Argument *to them*, which they can *leaſt* anſwer, preſſing them eagerly with the *matter of charge* (which they are as ready to confeſs, as he is to accuſe them of) and *aggravating* it very buſily. And becauſe the unskilful have no other *direction* for the finding the Knot of the Controverſie, than Satan's *buſle*, (though he, like the *Lapwing*, makes the greateſt noiſe when he is furtheſt from his Neſt, on purpoſe to draw them into a greater miſtake) they *look no further*; and then not being able to anſwer, they are ſoon caſt, and ſtriking in with the concluſion againſt themſelves, they multiply their Sorrows, and cry out of themſelves as miſerable.

2. Another piece of his Sophiſtry, is the improving certain *falſe Notions* (which Chriſtians of the weaker ſort have received) as *proofs* of their Unregeneracy, or bad Condition. As there are *Vulgar Errors* concerning Natural things, ſo there are *Popular Errors* concerning Spiritual things. Theſe miſtakes, in a great part, have their Original from the Fancies, or Miſapprehenſions of *unskilful* Men. Some indeed have (it may be) been preached and taught as Truths, others have riſen (without a Teacher) from meer Ignorance, being the concluſions and ſur-

mises which weak Heads have framed to themselves, from the Sayings, or Practices of Men, which have not been either so *cleared* from the danger of mistake, or not so *distinctly* apprehended as was necessary. These false Inferences once set on foot, are *traditionally* handed down to others, and in time they gain (among the simple) the opinion of undoubted Truths. Now where ever Satan finds any of these that are fit for his purpose (for to be sure whatever mistake we entertain, he will at one time or other cast it in our way) he will make it the foundation of an Argument against him that hath received it, and that with very great advantage. For a falshood in the *Premises*, will usually produce a falshood in the *Conclusion*. And these falshoods being taken for granted, the Devil is not put to the trouble to prove them, if then he can but exactly fit them to something in the party which he cannot deny, he forthwith carries the cause, and condemns him by his *own concessions*, as out of his *own mouth*.

'Tis scarce possible to number the false Notions which are already entertained among Christians, relating to Grace and Conversion, much less those that may afterward arise. But I shall mention some that Satan frequently makes use of, as grounds of Objection.

1. 'Tis a common apprehension among the weaker sort, that Conversion is *always* accompanied with *great fear and terrour*. This is true in some (as hath been said); and though none of the Preachers of the Gospel have asserted the universality of these *greater* measures of Trouble, yet the People taking notice, that *many* speak of their deep humiliations in Conversion; and that *several Authors* have set forth the greatness of Distress that *some* have been cast into on that occasion, (though without any intention of fixing this into a *general Rule*) have from thence supposed, that all the Converted are brought to their Comforts *through the flames of Hell*. Upon this mistake, the Devil disquiets those that have not felt these *extream Agonies* of Sorrow in themselves; and tells them that it is a *sure sign* that they are not yet Converted. Though 'tis easie for a Man that sees the falshood of the Notion, to answer the Argument, yet he that *believes it to be true*, cannot tell what to say, because he finds he never was under such Troubles, and now he begins to be troubled because he was not troubled *before*, or (as he supposeth) not troubled *enough*.

2. Another

2. Another false Notion is, That a Convert can give an account of the *time* and *manner* of his Conversion. This is true in *some*, as in *Paul*, and some others, whose Change hath been sudden and remarkable, though in *many* this is far otherwise; who can better give account that they *are* Converted, than by what *Steps*, *Degrees*, and *Methods*, they were brought to it. But if any of these receive the Notion, they will presently find that Satan will turn the edge of it against them, and will tell them that they are *not Converted*, because they cannot nominate the time when, nor the manner how such a Change was wrought.

3. Some take it for granted, that Conversion is accompanied with a *remarkable measure of Gifts* for Prayer and Exhortation; and then the Devil objects it to them, That they are not Converted, because they cannot *Pray* as others, or *Speak* of the things of God so readily, fluently, and affectionately, as some others can. Thus the poor weak Christian is baffled for want of *Abilities* to express himself to God and Men.

4. False Notions about the *nature of Faith*, are a sad stumbling-Block to some. Many suppose that Saving Faith is a *certain belief that our Sins are Pardoned, and that we shall be Saved*; making Faith and Assurance all one. This mistake is the deeper rooted in the Minds of Men, because some have directly taught so, and those, Men of Estimation; whose words are entertained with great Reverence by well-meaning Christians. For whom notwithstanding, this may be pleaded in excuse, that they have rather described Faith in *its height*, than in its *lowest measures*. However it be, those that have no other understanding of the nature of Faith, can never answer Satan's Argument, if he takes them at any time at the *advantage of fear, or doubting:* For then he will dispute thus, *Faith is a belief that sins are Pardoned, but thou dost not believe this; therefore thou hast no Faith.* Oh, what numbers of poor doubting Christians have been distressed with this Argument!

5. Some take it for a truth, that *growth* of Grace is always *visible*, and the progress remarkable. And then because they can make no such discovery of themselves, the Devil concludes their Grace to be counterfeit and hypocritical.

6. Of like nature are some *mistaken signs* of true Grace, as that true Grace fears God *only for his Goodness*. And then if there be any apprehension of Divine Displeasure impressed upon the Heart,

though upon the neceſſary occaſion of miſcarriage, they through the Devils inſtigation, conclude, that they are *under a ſpirit of Bondage*, and their ſuppoſed Grace not *true*, or not *genuine* at leaſt; according to that *diſpoſition* which the *New-Teſtament* will furniſh a Man withal. 'Tis alſo another miſtaken ſign of Grace: That it doth direct a Man to love God *ſingly* for himſelf, without the *leaſt regard* to his *own Salvation*; for that, they think, is but Self-love. Now when a Child of God doth not ſee his love to God ſo *diſtinct*, but that his *own ſalvation* is twiſted with it, Satan gets advantage of him, and forceth him to caſt away his love as adulterate and *ſelfiſh*. Like to this miſtake (but of an higher ſtrain) is that of ſome, That where Grace is true, 'tis ſo carried forth to honour God, that the Man that hath it, can deſire *God may be honoured, though he ſhould be damned*. God doth not put us to ſuch Queſtions as theſe, but upon ſuppoſition that this is true; the grace of moſt Men will be ſhaken by the Objection that Satan will make from thence; he can and will preſently put the miſtaken to it, *Canſt thou ſay thou art willing to go to Hell, that God may be glorified? If not, where is thy Grace?* From ſuch miſtakes as theſe, he diſputes againſt the holineſs of the Children of God; and 'tis impoſſible but that he ſhould carry the Cauſe, againſt thoſe who grant theſe things to be true. Satan can undeniably ſhew them, that their Hearts will not anſwer ſuch a deſcription of a Convert, or gracious Heart, as theſe falſe Notions will make. So long then as they hold theſe Notions, they have no relief againſt Satan's Concluſions; no comfort can be adminiſtred, till they be convinced that they have embraced Miſtakes for Truths. And how difficult that will be in this caſe (where the confidence of the Notion is great, and the ſuſpition ſtrong, that the defect is only in the Heart) hath been determined by frequent experience already.

3. The third piece of Satan's Sophiſtry, from whence he raiſeth falſe Concluſions, is his *miſrepreſentation of God*. In this he directly croſſeth the deſign of the Scriptures, where God in his Nature, and Dealings is ſo ſet forth, that the Weakeſt, the moſt Afflicted and Toſſed, may receive incouragement of Acceptance, and of his Fatherly Care over them in their ſaddeſt Tryals. Yet withal, leſt Men ſhould turn his Grace into Wantonneſs, and embolden themſelves in ſin becauſe of his Clemency, the Scriptures ſometimes give us lively deſcriptions of his Anger againſt thoſe

thoſe that wickedly preſume upon his Goodneſs, and continue ſo to do. *Both* theſe Deſcriptions of God ſhould be taken *together*, as affording the only true Repreſentation of him. He is ſo gentle to the humbled ſenſible Sinner, that *He will not break their bruiſed Reed, nor quench* their *ſmoking Flax.* And ſo careful of Health, that (for their recovery) he will not *leave* them *altogether unpuniſhed*; nor ſuffer them to ruine themſelves by a Surfeit upon worldly Comforts; yet *with the froward* he *will ſhew himſelf froward*, Pſal. 18. 26. And, *As for ſuch as turn aſide unto their crooked ways, the Lord ſhall lead them forth with the workers of Iniquity*, Pſal. 125. 5. He will *put out the Candle of the wicked*, for he ſets them in *ſlippery places: So that they are caſt down into Deſtruction, and brought into Deſolation as in a moment; they are conſumed with Terrours.* Now Satan will ſometimes argue againſt the Children of God, and endeavour to break their hopes, by turning *that part* of the Deſcription of God againſt them; which is *intended* for the diſmounting of the confidence of the Wicked, and the bringing down of high looks. By this means he wreſts the Deſcription of God to a contrary end, and miſrepreſents God to a trembling afflicted Soul. This he doth,

1. By miſrepreſenting *his Nature*: Here he reads a ſolemn Lecture of the *Holineſs* and *Juſtice* of God, but always with reflection upon the *vileneſs* and unworthineſs of the Perſon againſt whom he intends his Dart. And thus he Argues: *Lift up thine eyes to the Heavens, behold the brightneſs of God's Glory: Conſider his unſpotted Holineſs, his infinite Juſtice. The Heavens are not clean in his ſight, how much more abominable and filthy then art thou? His Eyes are pure, he cannot wink at, nor approve of the leaſt ſin: How canſt thou then imagine (except thou be intolerably impudent) that he hath taken ſuch an unclean wretch into his favour? He is a jealous God, and will by no means acquit the guilty; Canſt thou then with any ſhew of reaſon, conclude thy ſelf to be his Child? He beholds the wicked afar off; he ſhuts out their Prayer; he laughs at their Calamity; he mocks when their Fear comes; and therefore thou haſt no cauſe to think that he will hear thy cry, though thou ſhouldeſt make many Prayers. It cannot be ſuppoſed that he will incline his Ear. 'Tis his expreſs Determination, that if any Man regard iniquity in his Heart, the Lord will not hear his Prayer.* This, and a great deal more will he ſay. And while Satan ſpeaks but at this rate we may call him modeſt, becauſe his Allegations are in themſelves true, if they were applied

lied rightly. Sometimes he will go further, and plainly *belye* God, ſpeaking incredible falſhoods of him: but becauſe theſe properly appertain to an higher ſort of Troubles, of which I am next to ſpeak, I ſhall not hear mention them. However, if he ſtops here, he ſaith enough againſt any Servant of God, that carries an *high ſenſe* of his unworthineſs. For being thus brought to the view of theſe *aſtoniſhing* Attributes, he is daſhed out of Countenance, and can think no other, but that 'tis very unlikely, that *ſo unworthy* a Sinner ſhould have any intereſt in *ſo Holy* a God. Thus the Devil affrights him off, turning the *wrong ſide* of the Deſcription of God to him; and in the mean time *hiding* that part of it that ſpeaks God's wonderful Condeſcenſions, infinite Compaſſions, unſpeakable readineſs to accept the humble broken-hearted, Weary, heavy-laden Sinner, that is proſtrate at his Foot-ſtool for Pardon. All which are on purpoſe declared in the Deſcription of God's Nature, to obviate this Temptation, and to encourage the Weak.

2. He miſrepreſents God in his *Providence*. If God chaſtiſe his Children by any Affliction, Satan perverſly wreſts it to a bad Conſtruction, eſpecially if the Affliction be *ſharp*, or ſeem to be *above* their ſtrength, or *frequent*, and moſt of all if it ſeem to *croſs* their Hopes and Prayers; for then he argues, *Theſe are not the chaſtiſements of Sons: God indeed will viſit their Tranſgreſſions with Rods, but his dealing with thee is plainly of another nature, for he breaketh thee with his Tempeſts. And whereas he corrects his Sons that ſerve him in meaſure, thou art bowed down with thy trouble to diſtreſs and deſpair: but he will lay no more upon his Sons than they are able to bear, he will not always chide his Servants; but thou art afflicted every Morning. And beſides, if thou wert pure and upright, ſurely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy Righteouſneſs proſperous: for to his Sons he ſaith, Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee; and thou ſhalt glorify me.* Pſal. 50. 15. Hence comes the complaint of many, that they are not regenerated, becauſe they think God deals not with them as with others. *Oh! ſay they, we know God chaſtiſeth every Son whom he receiveth: but our caſe is every way different from theirs, our troubles are Plagues, not Rods; our cry is not heard, our Prayers diſregarded, our ſtrength faileth us, our Hearts fret againſt the Lord, ſo that not only the nature and quality of our Affections, but the frame of our heart under them, in not enduring the burthen (which is, the great Character of the chaſtiſement of Sons,* Heb. 12. 7. *) plainly*

evinceth

evinceth that we are under Gods hatred, and are not his Children. This Objection, though it might ſeem eaſy to be anſwered by thoſe that are not at preſent concerned, yet it will prove a difficult buſineſs to thoſe that are under the ſmart of Afflictions. How much a holy and wiſe Man may be gravell'd by it, you may ſee in *Pſal.* 73. where the Prophet is put to a grievous plunge upon this very objection, ver. 14. *all the day long have I been plagued, and chaſtiſed every Morning.*

And yet in all this Satan doth but play the Sophiſter, working upon the advantages, which the *nature* of the affliction, and the *temper* of Mens Hearts do afford him. For 1. Afflictions are a great *depth*, one of the *ſecrets* of God, ſo that 'tis hard to know what God intends by them. 2. The *end* of the Lord, is not diſcovered *at firſt*, but at ſome diſtance, when the Fruits thereof begin to appear. 3. The mind of the afflicted cannot always proceed *regularly* in making a judgment of God's deſign upon them: eſpecially at firſt when 'tis *ſtounded* by the aſſault, and all things in *confuſion*, Faith is to ſeek, Patience awanting, and Love ſtaggering; after it hath recollected it ſelf, and attained any *calmneſs*, to fit it for *a review* of the ways of God, and of the Heart, it is better enabled to fix ſome grounds of Hope. Lam. 3. 19, 20, 21. *This I recall to my Mind, therefore have I Hope.* 4. Afflictions have *a Light* and *a Dark* ſide, and their appearances are according to our *poſture* in which we view them: as ſome Pictures, which if we look upon them one way, they appear to be Angels, if another way, they ſeem Devils.

5. Some Men in Affliction do *only buſy* themſelves in looking upon the dark ſide of Affliction. Their diſpoſition (either through *natural timerouſneſs*, or *ſtrong impreſſions* of Temptation) is only to *meditate terrours*, and to ſurmiſe evils. Theſe Men out of the Croſs, can draw nothing but the *Wormwood* and the *Gall*, while others, that have another Proſpect of them, obſerve *mixtures* of Mercy and Gentleneſs, and do *melt* into ſubmiſſion and thankfulneſs. Theſe (conſidered together) are a great advantage to Satan in diſputing againſt the peace of Gods afflicted Children, and it often falls out, that as he doth *miſrepreſent* God's deſign, ſo do they (urged by Temptation) upon that account *misjudge* themſelves.

3. He alſo miſrepreſents God in the *works of his Spirit*; if God withdraw his countenance, or by his Spirit ſignifies his diſplea-

ſure to the Conſciences of any, if he permit Satan to moleſt them with Spiritual Temptations, preſently Satan takes occaſion to put his falſe and malignant interpretation upon all: he tells them that *Gods hiding* his Face is his *caſting them off*, that the *threatnings* ſignified to their Conſcience, are plain *declarations* that their preſent ſtate is Wrath and Darkneſs. That Satans *moleſtations* by Temptations, ſhew them to be yet under *his power*; that the *removal* of their former Peace, Joy, and ſenſible delight which they had in the ways of God, is beyond contradiction, an evidence that God hath *no delight* in them, nor they in him; that their Faith was but that of *Temporaries*, their Joy but that of *Hypocrites*, which is only for a moment. How often have I heard Chriſtians complaining thus? *We cannot be in a ſtate of Grace, our Conſciences lye under the ſenſe of Gods diſpleaſure, they give teſtimony againſt us, and we know that teſtimony is true, for we feel it. 'Tis true, time was when we thought we had a delight in Hearing, Praying, Meditating, but now all is a burthen to us, we can reliſh nothing, we can profit nothing, we can remember nothing: time was when we thought we had aſſurance, and our Hearts rejoyced in us; ſometimes we have thought our Hearts had as much of Peace and Comfort as they could hold, now all is vaniſhed and we are under ſad fears: if God had had a favour to us, would he have dealt thus with us?* Thus are they cheated into a belief that they never had any Grace; they take all for granted that is urged againſt them: they cannot conſider Gods *deſign* in hiding his Face, nor yet can they ſee how *Grace acts* in them under theſe complainings; how they expreſs their *Love* to God in their *deſires* and pantings after him, in their *bewailing* of his abſence, in *abhorring* and condemning themſelves, &c. but their preſent feeling, (and an Argument from ſence is very ſtrong) bears down all before it.

Thus doth Satan frame his Arguments from miſrepreſentations of God, which (though a right view of God would eaſily anſwer them, yet) how difficult it is for a Perſon in an hour of Temptation to diſpel, by a right apprehenſion of the ways of the Holy God, doth abundantly appear from *Pſal.* 77. where the caſe of *Aſaph* (or whoever elſe he was) doth inform us 1. That 'tis uſual for Satan, for the diſquieting of the Hearts of Gods Children, to offer *a falſe Proſpect* of God. 2. That this *overwhelms* their Hearts with grief, *ver.* 3. 3. That the more they perſiſt in the proſecution of this method, under the *Miſts of Prejudice*,

judice, they ſee the leſs, being apt to miſconſtrue every thing in God to their diſadvantage, *ver. 3. I remembred God, and was troubled.* 4. The reaſon of all that trouble lies in this, that they can *only conclude* wrath and deſertion from God's carriage toward them. 5. That till they look upon God in *another method*, and take up better thoughts of him and his Providences, even while they carry the appearance of Severity, they can expect no eaſe to their complainings. For before the Prophet quitted himſelf of his trouble, he was forced to acknowledg *his miſtake* (*ver.* 10.) in the miſconſtruction he made of his dealings, and to betake himſelf to a reſolve of entertaining better thoughts of God, *ver.* 7. His Interrogation, *Will the Lord caſt off for ever*, &c? ſhews indeed what he did once think, being miſled by Satan, but withal that he would never do ſo again, *Will the Lord caſt off for ever?* Is not here the Voice of a deſpairing Man? but of one that through better information hath *rectified* his Judgment, and now is reſolved ſtrongly to hold *the contrary* to what he thought before, as if he ſhould ſay, *'Tis not poſſible that it ſhould be ſo, he will not caſt off for ever, and I will never entertain ſuch perverſe thoughts of God any more.* 6. But before they can come to this, it will coſt them ſome pains and ſerious thoughts; 'tis not eaſy to break theſe Fetters, to anſwer this Argument; but they that will do ſo, muſt *appeal* from their preſent ſence, to a conſideration *of the iſſues* of theſe dealings upon *other Perſons*, or upon themſelves at *other times*: for the Prophet, ver. 5. *conſidered the days of old, and the years of ancient times*; and *ver. 6*, he alſo made uſe of his own experience, calling *to remembrance*, that after ſuch dealings as theſe, God by his return of favour gave him *Songs in the Night*.

4. Another common head from whence this great Diſputant doth fetch his Arguments againſt the good condition and ſtate of God's Servants, is their *ſin and miſcarriages*. Here I ſhall obſerve two or three things in the general concerning this, before I ſhew how he draws his falſe Concluſions from thence. As,

1. That with a kind of *feigned ingenuity*, he will grant a difference betwixt *Sin and Sin*, betwixt Sins reigning, and not reigning; Sins mortified, and not mortified; betwixt the Sins of the Converted, and the Unconverted: and upon this ſuppoſition he uſually proceeds. He doth not always (except in caſe of *great Sins*) argue want of Regeneration from *one Sin* for that Argu-

ment ; *This is a Sin, therefore thou art not a Convert,* would be easily answered, by one that knows the Saints have their imperfections but he thus deals with Men : *These Sins whereof thou art guilty, are reigning Sins,* such as are inconsistent with a converted estate, and therefore thou art yet unregenerated.

2. He produceth usually for the backing of his Arguments, such Scriptures as do *truly* represent the state of Men *unsanctified* ; but then his labour is to make the Parties to appear *suitable* to the description of the Unregenerate. And to that purpose he *aggravates* all their failings to them : he makes severe enquiries after all their Sins, and if he can charge them with any *notorious* crime, he lays load upon that, still concluding that a Regenerate Person doth not sin at such a rate as they do.

3. This is always a very *difficult* case ; 'tis not easy to answer the objections that he will urge from hence: for 1. if there be the real guilt of any *grievous* or remarkable scandal which he objects, the accused Party (though never so knowing, or (formerly) never so holy) will be hardly put to it to determine any thing in favour of his estate. 1. The *Fact* cannot be denyed. 2. The Scripture nominates *particularly* such offences, as render a Man unfit for the Kingdom of God. 3. Whether in such cases, Grace be not *wholly* lost, is a *question* in which all are not agreed. 4. However it will be very doubtful whether such had *ever* any Grace. The Scripture hath given *no note* of difference, to distinguish betwixt a Regenerate and Unregenerate Person, *In the acts* of Murther, Adultery, Fornication, *&c.* It doth not say the Regenerate commits an act of gross Iniquity *in this manner*, the Unregenerate *in that*, and that there is a *visible* distinction betwixt the one and the othar, relating to these *very Acts*. And whatever may be supposed to be the *inward* workings of Grace in the Soul, while 'tis reduced to so *narrow* a compass, as a spark of Fire raked up in Ashes, yet the *weight* of present guilt upon the Soul (when 'tis charged home) will always *poise* it toward the *worst* apprehensions that can be made concerning its state. *Former* acts of Holiness will be disowned under the notion of Hypocrisy ; or if yet owned to be true, they will be apt to think that true Grace may be *utterly lost*. *Present* acts of Grace they can see none, so that only the *after-acts* of Repentance can discover that there is yet a being and life of Grace in them, and *till then* they can never answer Satans Argument from great Sins. But, 2. In the *usual infirmities* of God's Children

the

the caſe is not *ſo eaſy*. For the Scriptures give inſtances of ſome, whoſe Converſations could not be taxed with any notorious evils; who though they were *not far from the Kingdom of God*, yet were not *of the Kingdom of God:* a freedom then from *great Sins*, is not pleadable, as an *undoubted mark* of Grace. And if others that are *not converted*, may have no greater infirmities than ſome *that are*, the *difference* betwixt the one and the other muſt depend upon the *ſecret* Powers of Grace, giving check to theſe infirmities, and ſtriving to mortify them: And this will be an *intricate* queſtion. The Apoſtle, *Rom.* 7. 15. notes indeed *three* differences betwixt the Regenerate and Unregenerate, in this caſe of Sins of Infirmity. 1. *Hatred* of the Sin *before* the commiſſion of it; *What I hate, that do I.* 2. *Reluctancy in the Act: what I would, that do I not.* 3. *Diſallowance after the Act: that which I do, I allow not.* Yet ſeeing natural Light will afford ſome *appearances* of diſallowance, and reluctancy, it will ſtill admit of further debate, Whether the *Principles*, *Motives*, *Degrees* and *Succeſs* of theſe ſtrivings, be ſuch as may diſcover the Being and Power of real Grace.

While Satan doth inſiſt upon Arguments from the Sins of Believers, for the proof of an unconverted eſtate, he only aims to make good this point, That *their* Sins are *reigning* Sins, and conſequently that they cannot be in ſo good a condition as they are willing to think. And to make their Sins to carry that appearance, his conſtant courſe is to *aggravate* them all he can: this is his deſign, and the means by which he would effect it. His great *Art* in this caſe, is to heighten the Sins of the Regenerate; this he doth many ways. As,

1. From the *nature* of the Sin committed, and the *manner* of its commiſſion: and this he chiefly labours, becauſe his Arguments from hence are more probable, eſpecially conſidering what he fixeth upon uſually, is that which may moſt favour his Concluſion. A

1. If any have faln into a *great Sin*, which a Child of God doth but *rarely* commit, then he argues againſt him, thus: *They that are in Chriſt, do mortify the Fleſh with the Affections and Luſts, they caſt away the works of Darkneſs: and theſe works of the Fleſh are manifeſt*, Gal. 5. 19. *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations*, &c. *Becauſe of theſe things cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Diſobedience. Be not therefore partakers with them, have no fellowſhip with the unfruit-*

ful works of Darkneſs, Eph. 5. 6, 11. *But thou haſt not put theſe away, nor mortified them, as thy preſent Sin doth teſtify, therefore thou art no Child of God.* 2. If any do more than once or twice *relapſe* into the ſame Sin, (ſuppoſe it be not ſo highly ſcandalous as the former) then he pleads from thence, that they are *back-ſliders in Heart*, that they have *broken their Covenant* with God, that they are *in bondage* to Sin. Here he urgeth, it may be, that of 2 Pet. 2.19, 20. *Of whom a Man is overcome, of the ſame is he brought in bondage*; —— *The Dog is returned to his Vomit.* 3. Or if any have by any offence, more remarkably gone *againſt their Knowledge* or *violated* their Conſcience, then he tells them, that *they ſin wilfully, that they reject the Counſel of the Lord, that they are the Servants of Sin*; *for his Servants ye are to whom ye obey.* Rom. 6. 16. *And that where there is Grace, though they may fall, yet it is ſtill againſt their wills*, &c. 4. If he have not ſo clear ground to manage any of the former charges againſt them, then he argues from the *frequency* of their *various* miſcarriages. Here he ſets their Sins *in order* before them, *rakes* them altogether, that he may oppreſs them by a *multitude*, when he cannot prevail by an accuſation from one or two acts: and his pleading here is, *Thou art nothing but Sin, thy thoughts are evil continually; thy words are vain and unprofitable, thy actions fooliſh and wicked, and this in all thy imployments, in all relations, at all times. What duty is there that is not neglected or defiled? what Sin that is not ſome way or other committed?* &c. *Can ſuch an Heart as thine be the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt? For the Temple of the Lord is Holy, and his People are waſhed and cleanſed*, &c.

Theſe are all of them ſtrong objections, and frequently made uſe of by Satan, as the complaints of the Servants of God do teſtify, who are made thus to except againſt themſelves; *If our Sins were but the uſual failings of the converted, we might comfort our ſelves, but they are great, they are back-ſlidings, they are againſt Conſcience, they are many; what can we judge, but that we have hitherto deceived our ſelves, and that the work of converſion is yet to do?* The Objections that are from *great* Sins, or from *recidivation*, or wilful *violation* of Conſcience, do uſually prevail for *ſome time*, againſt the beſt that are chargable with them; they cannot determine that they *are converted* (though they might be ſo,) ſo long as they cannot deny the *matter of Fact* upon which the accuſation is grounded; till their *true repentance* give them ſome light of better information, they are in the dark and cannot anſwer the Argument. *Jonah* being im-

prisoned in the Whales Belly, for his stubborn rebellion, at *first* concluded himself a Cast-away: Jon. 2.4. *Then I said I am cast out of thy Sight:* Neither could he think better of himself, till upon his *Repentance*, he recovered his Faith and Hope of Pardon, *Yet will I look again toward thy Holy Temple.* Yea those objections that are raised from the *multitude* and *frequency* of lesser failings, though they may be answered by a Child of God, while his Heart is not *overshadowed* with the Mists and Clouds of Temptation, yet when he is confused with violent commotions within, his Heart will fail him, and till he can bring himself to some *composure* of Spirit, he hath not the *boldness* to assert his integrity. *David* was gravelled with this Objection, Psal. 40. 12. *Innumerable evils have compassed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the Hairs on my Head, therefore my Heart faileth me.*

2. He aggravates the sinfulness of our condition, from the *frequency* and *violence* of *his own* Temptations. 'Tis an usual thing for him to give a young Converts, *incessant onsets* of Temptation to Sin: most commonly he works upon their *natural constitution*, he blows the Coals that are not yet quite extinguished, and that have greater forwardness from their own inclination to kindle again; as Lust and Passion. The *first motions* of the one, (though it go no further, than those *offers* and risings up in the Heart, and is there *damped*, and kept down by the opposing principle of Grace) and the *occasional out-breakings* of the other, (which he provokes by a diligent preparation of *occasion* from without, and violent *incitations* from within) furnish him with sufficient matter for his intended accusations; and sometimes (being as it were wholly negligent of the advantages which our tempers give him, or not being able to find any such forwardness to these evils in our Constitution, as may more eminently serve his ends) he satisfies himself to molest us with earnest motions to *any Sins* indifferently; and all this to make us believe, that Sin is not crucified in us. Which some are more apt to believe, because they observe their Temptations to these Sins, to importune them *more*, and with *greater vehemency* than they were wont to do before: and this doth yet the more astonish them, because they had high *expectations* that after their conversion, Satan would *fall before them*, and their Temptations *abate*; that their natures should be altered, and their natural inclinations to these Sins *wholly cease*: but now finding the contrary

trary, they are ready to cry out, (especially when Satan violently buffets them with this objection) *We are yet in our Sins, and under the dominion thereof; neither can it be that we are converted, because we find Sin more active and stirring than formerly; 'tis not then surely mortified in us, but lively and strong.* Though in this case it be very plain that *Temptations* are only strong, and *Sin* weak, and that Grace is *faithfully* acting its part against the Flesh, arguing, not that Grace is so very *weak*, but that Satan is more *busy* than ordinary; the Sins are not *more* than formerly, but the *Light* that discovers them more is *greater*, and the *Conscience* that resents the Temptation is more *tender*. Yet all this doth not at first give ease to the fears that are now raised up in the Mind; they find Sin *working* in them, their *expectations* of attaining a greater conquest on a *sudden*, and with greater *ease*, are *disappointed*, (and the desire of having much, makes a Man think himself poor); and withal they commonly labour under so much *Ignorance*, or perverse *credulity*, that they conclude they *consent* to every thing which they are *tempted* to, insomuch that 'tis long before these Clouds do vanish, and the afflicted brought to a right understanding of themselves.

3. From some *remarkable appearances* of God, doth Satan aggravate our sinful condition. If God shew any notable act of *Power*, he makes the Beams of that act *reflect* upon our *unworthiness* with a dazling Light. When *Peter* saw the Power of Christ in sending a great multitude of Fishes into his Net, (having laboured all Night before and caught nothing) it gave so deep an impression to the conviction of his vileness, that he was ready to put Christ from him as being altogether unfit for his Blessed Society, *Depart* (saith he) *from me, for I am a sinful Man.* If God discover the Glorious Splendor of his *Holiness*, 'tis enough to make the holiest Saints (such as *Job* and *Isaiah*) to cry out they are *undone*, being
Job 42. 6. Isa. 6. 5. *Men of unclean Lips*, and to *abhor themselves in Dust and Ashes.* The like may be said of any discovery of the rest of the Glorious Attributes of God. Of all which Satan makes this advantage, that the Parties tempted should have so deep a consideration of their unworthiness, as might induce them to believe, (as if it were by a Voice from Heaven) that God *prohibits* them any approaches to him, and that they have nothing to do to take Gods Name within their Mouths. And though these remarkable discoveries of God (either by his acts of Power and Providence, or by immediate

diate impressions upon the Soul, in the height of contemplation) have ordinarily *great effects* upon the Hearts of his Children, but not of long continuance: yet where they strike in with *other* Arguments by which they were *already* staggered as to their Interest in God, they mightily strengthen them, and are taken for no less than Gods own determination of the question against them.

But this is not all the use that Satan makes of them; for from hence he sometimes hath the opportunity to raise *new accusations* against them, and to tax them with *particular* crimes, which in a particular *manner* seem to prove them Unregenerate. For what would seem to be a clearer Character of a Man dead in Trespasses and Sins, than a *hard Heart*, that can neither be sensible of Judgments nor Mercies? This he sometimes chargeth upon the Children of God, from the great *disproportion* that they find in themselves, betwixt the *little sence* that they seem to have (and that which is *disproportionable*, they reckon to be *nothing*,) and the *vast greatness* of Gods Mercy or Holiness. I have observed some to complain of utter *unthankfulness*, and *insensibleness* of Heart (from thence concluding confidently against themselves) because, when God hath remarkably appeared for them, in deliverances from dangers, or in unexpected kindnesses, they could not render a thankfulness that carried any proportion to the Mercy. While they were in the highest *admiration* of the kindness, saying, *What shall I render to the Lord?* they were quite out of the *sight* of their own sence and feeling, and thought they returned *nothing* at all, because they returned nothing *equivalent* to what they had received. Others I have known, who from the *confusion* and amazement of their Spirit, when they have been overwhelmed with troubles, have positively determined themselves to be *sensless*, stupid, past feeling, hardened to destruction: when in both cases any might have seen the *working* of their Hearts to be an apparent *contradiction* to what Satan charged them withal. For they were not *unapprehensive* either of Mercies or Judgments; but on the contrary, had only a *greater sence* of them than they were able to manage.

4. To make full measure, Satan doth sometimes aggravate the miscarriages of those whom he intends to accuse, by *comparing* their lives and actions with the *holy Lives* of some eminent Servants of God, especially such as they have *only* heard of, and

not known perſonally. For ſo they have only their *Vertues* repreſented, without their *failings*. Here Satan takes a liberty of declaming againſt them: and though he could never ſpare a Saint a good word out of reſpect; yet, that others might be put out of heart and hope, he will *commend* the holineſs, ſtrictneſs, care, conſtancy of *dead* Saints to the Skies. And then he Queries, *Art thou ſuch an one? Canſt thou ſay thou art any thing like them, for a heavenly Heart, a holy Life, a contempt of the World, a zeal for God, for good Works, for patient Suffering?* &c. (All this while not a word of their Weakneſſes). *Theſe* (ſaith he) *were the Servants of the Moſt High: their Examples thou ſhouldſt follow, if thou expecteſt their Crown. Had they any more Holineſs than they needed? And if thou haſt not ſo much, thou art nothing.* What can Humility, Modeſty, and ſenſe of Guilt, ſpeak in ſuch a caſe? They go away mourning, their Fears increaſe upon them; and what God hath ſet before them (in the Examples of his Servants) for the *increaſe* of their diligence, they take to be as a *Witneſs* againſt them, to prove them Unconverted.

5. The laſt part of Satan's Sophiſtry, is to leſſen their *Graces*, that ſo he may altogether *deny* them. In this he proceeds upon ſuch Scriptures, as do aſſert the Fruits of the Spirit; and urgeth for his foundation, that none are the Children of God, but ſuch as *are led by the Spirit*; and that *he that hath not the Spirit of Chriſt, is none of his*. The *neceſſity* of Faith, Love, Patience, Humility, with the Fruits of theſe and other Graces, he *preſſeth*; but ſtill in order to a Demonſtration (as he pretends) that ſuch are *not to be found* in thoſe, whoſe Gracious ſtate he calls into queſtion, and conſequently that they are not the Children of God.

The *Rule* by which he manageth himſelf in this Diſpute, is this: *The more Graces are heightned in the Notions, that muſt give an account of their Nature and Beings; the more difficult it will be to find out their Reality in the Practice of them.* His deſign then hath theſe *two* parts. 1. He *heightens* Grace in the *Notion*, or Abſtract, all he can. 2. He *leſſens* it in the Concrete, or *Practice*, as much as is poſſible, that it may appear a very Nullity, a ſhadow and not a ſubſtance. I ſhall ſpeak a little of both.

1. As to the *firſt part* of his Deſign, he hath many ways by which he *aggravates* Grace in the Notion. We may be ſure if it lie in his way, he will not ſtick to give *falſe definitions* of Grace;

and

and to tell Men that it is, what indeed it is not. He is a Lyar, and in any case whatsoever he will lie for his *advantage*, if he have hope his Lye may pass for current; but he cannot always use a *palpable Cheat* in this matter, where the nature of any Grace is positively determined in Scripture, except it be with the *Ignorant*, or where the nature of Grace is made a business of *Controversie* among Men. I will not make Conjectures what Satan may possibly say, in belying the nature of Grace, to make it seem to be quite another thing than it is; but shall rather shew you the more usual plausible ways of Deceit which herein he exerciseth; and they are these that follow.

1. As the same Graces have different *Degrees* in several Persons, and these different Degrees have *Operations* suitable; some Acts being stronger, some weaker, some more perfected and ripened, others more imperfect, and immature: So when Satan comes to describe Grace, he sets it forth in its *highest Excellencies*, and most glorious Attainments. You shall never observe him to speak of Graces at their *lowest pitch*, (except where he is carrying on a design for *Presumption*, and then he tells Men that any *Wishing*, or *Woulding* is Grace; and every formal [*Lord forgive me*] is true Repentance): but on the contrary he offers the highest reach of it, that any Saint on Earth ever arrived at, as *essentially* necessary to constitute its *Being*; and tells them if they have not *that*, they have *nothing*. Let us see it in the Particulars. 1. Grace sometimes hath its *Extraordinaries*; (as I may call them.) We have both Precept and Example of that nature in Scripture, which are propounded not as the *common Standard* by which the Being and *Reality* of Grace is to be measured, but as *Patterns* for imitation, to provoke us to Emulation; and to quicken us in pressing forward. Of this nature I reckon to be the Example of *Moses*, desiring to be blotted *out of God's Book* (whatever he meant by it) in his love to the People; and the like of the Apostle *Paul*, wishing himself to be *accursed from Christ for his Brethrens sake*. Of this nature also we have many Precepts; as *rejoyce evermore*, of *waiting* and *longing* for the Appearance of Christ, of *rejoycing* when we *fall into divers Temptations*; and many more to this purpose, All which are heights of Grace that do *rarely* appear among the Servants of God, at any time. 2. Grace hath sometimes its *special Assistances*; this is when the occasion is *extraordinary*, but the Grace befitting that occasion is

promised *in ordinary*, and ordinarily recieved. When God calls any to such occasions, though compared with that *measure of Grace*, which usually is acted by the Children of God upon ordinary occasions; it is a special assistance of the Spirit. Of this nature, is that *Boldness* which the Servants of Christ receive, to *confess* Christ before Men in times of Persecution, and to *Die* for the Truth, with Constancy, Courage, and Joy. 3. There are also singular *Eminencies* of Grace, which some diligent, careful, and *choice* Servants of God attain unto, far above what the *ordinary sort* arrive at. *Enoch* had his Conversation so much in Heaven, that he was said to *walk with God*. *David's* Soul was often full of *delight* in God. Some in the height of Assurance, rejoyce in God, with *joy unspeakable, and full of Glory*. *Moses* was eminent in *Meekness*; *Job* in *Patience*; the Apostle *Paul* in *Zeal*, for promoting the Gospel, *&c.* Now Satan, when he comes to question the Graces of Men, he presents them with these Measures; and if they fall short, (as ordinarily they do) he concludes them altogether Graceless.

2. Satan also can do much to heighten the *ordinary work*, and usual fruits of *every* Grace. His Art herein, lies in two things. 1. He gives us a description of Grace as it is *in it self*, abstracted from the Weakness, Dulness, Distraction, and Infirmities that are Concomitant with it, as it comes forth to Practice. He brings to our view Grace in its *Glory*, and without the *Spots* by which our Weakness, and Satan's Temptation, do much *disfigure* it. 2. He presents us with Grace in its *whole Body*, compleated with all its Members, Faith, Love, Hope, Patience, Meekness, Gentleness, *&c.* From both these, he sets before those whom he intends to discourage, a compleat *Copy* of an *exact* holy Christian: As if every true Christian were to be found in the *constant* Practice of *all these Graces at all times*, on *all occasions*, and that without weakness or Infirmity. Whereas indeed, a true Christian may be found sometimes *evidently* practising *one* Grace, and weak, or at present *defective in another*. And sometimes the best of his Graces is so *interrupted* with Temptation, so *clogged* with Infirmity, that its workings are scarce *discernable*.

3. He hath a Policy in heightning those *Attainments* and workings of Soul, in things relating to God and Religion, which are to be found in *Temporary Believers*; which because they sometimes appear in the Unconverted, as well as in the Converted, (though all

all Unconverted Men have them not) are therefore called *Common* Graces. This he doth that he may from thence take occasion to *disprove* the *Real* Graces of the Servants of God; of whom *better things, and things that accompany Salvation* (that is special saving Graces) are to be expected, *Heb.* 6. 9. His way herein is, 1. To shew the utmost *bravery* of these Common Graces, how much Men may have, how far they may go, and yet at last come to nothing. For *Gifts* they may have powerful *Eloquence, Prophecy*, understanding of *Mysteries*, faith of *Miracles*. For *good Works*; they may give their *Estates to relieve the Poor*: In *Moral Vertues*, they may be Excellent, their *Illumination* may be great; they may *taste the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come*, Heb. 6. 4. Their Conversation may be *without offence*, and their Conscience *Honest*, as *Paul's* was before his Conversion. 2. With these *heights* of common Grace, he compares the *lowest degree* of Special Grace. And because the *Principles, Motives*, and *Ends*, which constitute the difference betwixt these two, are (as it were) *under-ground*, more remote from Sense and Observation, and oftentimes darkned by Temptation: He takes the boldness to deny the Truth of Grace, upon the account of the small inconsiderable *appearance* that it makes, confidently affirming, that Special Grace must of necessity make a far greater *outward shew* than these Common Graces. In what manner, and to what end, Satan doth *heighten Grace* in the *abstract* we have seen: It remains that we discover,

2. How he doth *lessen* Grace in the *Concrete*; this is the center of his Design. He would not extol Grace so much, but that he hopes thereby to *condemn the Generation of the Just*, and to make it appear, that there are *few* or *none*, that are truly Gracious. When he comes to apply all this to the condition of any Child of God, he deals treacherously; and his cunning consists of three Parts.

1. He compares the *present state* of any one, with whom he deals, to the *highest* attainments and excellencies of Grace; allowing nothing to be Grace, but what will answer these Descriptions he had already given. Here the Tempter doth apparently make use of a *false Ballance*, and *a Bag of deceitful Weights*. For thus he puts them to it: *Thou sayest thou hast Grace, but thou dost altogether deceive thy self, for indeed thou hast none at all. Compare thy self with others, that were in Scripture noted, as undoubtedly*

Gracious, and thou wilt see that in the Ballance, thou art lighter than Vanity. Abraham *had Faith, but he believed above hope.* Moses *and* Paul *had love, but they manifested it by preferring their Brethrens happiness before their own.* David *was a Saint, but he had a Heart ravished with God. The Martyrs spoken of in* Heb. 11. *they could do Wonders; they were above fears of Men, above the love of the World; they loved not their Lives to the Death: How joyfully took they the spoyling of their Goods? How couragiously did they suffer the sharpest Torments? Besides* (saith he) *all the Children of God are described as Sanctified throughout, abounding with all fruits of Righteousness; their Faith is Working; their Love still Laborious; their Hope produceth constant Patience: What art thou to these? That in thee which thou callest Faith, or Love, or Patience,* &c. *'tis not fit to be named with these: Thy fears may tell thee, that thou hast no Faith, and so may thy Works; thy murmurings under God's Hand is evidence sufficient, that thou hast no Patience. The little that thou dost for God, or especially wouldst do, if it were not for thy own advantage, may convince thee that thou hast no love to him; thy weariness of Services and Duties, thy confessed unprofitableness under all, do proclaim thou hast no delight in God, nor in his Ways.* He further adds, for the confirmation of all this: *Consider how far Temporaries may go, that shall never go to Heaven. Thou art far short of them; thy Gifts, thy Works, thy Vertues, thy Illumination, thy Conversation, thy Conscientiousness are nothing like theirs: How is it possible then that such an one as thou (a pittiful contemptible Creature) shouldst have any thing of true Grace in thee?* Thus he makes the Application of all the Discovery of Grace, which he presented to them. Though he needs not urge *all* these things to every one, any one of these particulars frequently serves the turn. When a trembling Heart compares it self with these Instances, it turns its Back, yields the Argument, and is ashamed of its former Hopes, as those are of their former Confidence, who flee from Battel. Hence then do we hear of these various Complaints: One saith, *Alas! I have no Grace, because I live not as other Saints have done in all exactness.* Another saith, *I have no Faith, because I cannot believe above Reason, and contrary to Sense, as* Abraham *did.* A third crys out, *He hath no Love to God, because he cannot find his Soul ravished with desire after him.* Another thinks, *He hath a hard Heart, because he cannot weep for Sin.* Another concludes against himself, because *He finds not a present chearful resolve* (while he is not under any question for Religion) *to suffer Torments for*

Christ. Some fear themselves, *Because Temporaries in some particulars, have much out-gone them*. You see how Complaints may upon this score, be multiplied without end; and yet all this is but Fallacy. Satan tells them what Grace is at the *highest*, but not a word of what it is at *lowest*: And so *unskilful* is a tossed, weak Christian, that he in examining his Condition, looks after the *highest Degrees* of Grace (as affording clearer Evidence) and not after the *Sincerity* of it; which is the safest way for Trial, where Graces are weak. In a word, this kind of Arguing is no better than that of Children, who cannot conclude themselves to be *Men*, because their present stature is *little*, and they are not as tall as the Adult.

2. Another part of his cunning in lessening the real Graces of God's Children, is to take them at an advantage, when their Graces are *weakest*, and themselves most *out of order*. He that will chuse to measure a Man's Stature while he is upon his Knees, seems not to design to give a faithful account of his Height. No more doth Satan, who, when he will make Comparisons, always takes the Servants of God at the worst. And indeed, many advantages do the Children of God give him, insomuch that it is no wonder that he doth so oft Baffle them, but rather a wonder that they at any time return to their Comforts. 1. Sometimes he takes them to task while they are yet *young and tender*, when they are but newly converted, before their Graces are grown up, or have had time to put forth any considerabe Fruit. 2. Or when their Graces are *tired out*, by long or grievous assaults of Temptation; for then they are not what they are at other times. 3. When their Hearts are *discomposed*, or *muddied* with fear; for then their sight is bad, and they can so little judg of things that differ, that Satan can impose almost any thing upon them. 4. Sometimes he comes upon them, when some Grace *acts* his part but *poorly* (as not having its *perfect work*) and is scarce able to get through, sticking as it were in the Birth. 5. Or when the *progress* of Grace is small and *imperceptible*. 6. Or while in the *absence* of the Sun (which produceth Flowers, and Fragrancy, and is the time of the *singing of Birds*, Cant. 2. 11, 12.) it is forced to cast off its *Summer Fruits* of Joy, and sensible Delights; and only produceth *Winter Fruits*, of Lamenting after God, Longing and Panting after him, justifying of God in his Dealings, and Condemning it self; all this while *sowing in Tears*, for a more plea-

sing

ſing Crop. 7. Or while *Expectations* are more than *Enjoyments*, the Man it may be promiſed himſelf large incomes of greater meaſures of Comforts, Eaſe, or Strength, under ſome particular Ordinances, or Helps which he hath lately attained to; and not finding things preſently to anſwer what he hoped for, is now ſuſpitious of his caſe, and thinks he hath attained nothing, becauſe he hath not what he would. 8. Sometimes Satan ſhews them his Face in this Glaſs, when 'tis *fouleſt*, through the ſpots of ſome Miſcarriage. 9. Or he takes advantage of ſome *Natural Defects*, as want of *Tears*, which might be more uſual in former times, but are now dried up; or from the *Ebbings* and uncertainty of his Affections, which are never ſure rules of Trials. 10. Or in ſuch acts that are of a *mixed* nature in the Principles and Motives, where it may ſeem to be *uncertain* to which the *Act* muſt be aſcribed, as to the *true* Parent. The Heart of a gracious Perſon being challenged upon any of theſe Points, and under ſo great a Diſadvantage, being called out to give a proof of himſelf, eſpecially in the view of Grace ſet forth in all its Excellency and Glory, ſhall have little to plead, but will rather own the Accuſation. And the rather, becauſe

3. It is another part of Satan's cunning, to urge them (whilſt they are thus at a ſtand) with a *Poſſibility*, nay, a *Probability* of their *miſtaking* themſelves, by paſſing too favourable an opinion formerly of their Actions. To confirm them in this apprehenſion: 1. He lays before them the conſideration of the *deceitfulneſs* of the Heart, which (being ſo, above all things, and deſperately wicked, beyond ordinary diſcovery) makes a fair way for the entertainment of a ſuſpition of *Self-deluſion* in all the former hopes which a Man hath had of himſelf. Satan will plainly ſpeak it: *Thou haſt had ſome thoughts and workings of Mind towards God, but ſeeing they carry ſo great a diſproportion to Rule and Example, and come ſo far ſhort of Common Graces; 'tis more than probable, that ſuch poor, weak, confuſed appearances are nothing. How knoweſt thou that thine adherance to, and practice of the Command and Services of God are any more, than from the power of* Education, *the prevalency of Cuſtom, or the impreſſions of Moral ſwaſion? How doſt thou know that thy deſires after God, and thy delight in him, are any more than the products of Natural Principles, influenced by an Hiſtorical faith of Scripture Doctrine?* 'Tis oftentimes enough for Satan to hint this: A ſuſpitious Heart (as it were greedy of its own miſery)

Jer. 17. 6.

ſery) catcheth at all things that make againſt it: and hence complains; That it hath no Grace becauſe it ſees not any viſible Fruits, or makes not a ſufficient appearance at all times, when oppoſed, or reſiſted; or becauſe it wants ſenſible progreſs, or gives not the Summer Fruits of Praiſes, Rejoycings, and Delights in God; or becauſe it ſeems not to meet with remarkable improvements in Ordinances; or becauſe it cannot produce Tears, and raiſe the Affections; and becauſe the Party doth not know but his Heart might decieve him, in all that he hath done. Which the Devil yet further endeavoureth to confirm, 2. By a conſideration of the *ſeeming* Holineſs and Graces of ſuch, as believed themſelves to be the Children of God, and were generally by others reputed ſo to be; who yet, after a glorious profeſſion, turned Apoſtates. This being ſo great and undeniable an Inſtance of the Hearts deceitfulneſs, makes the poor tempted Party conclude, that he is certainly no true Convert.

Thus have we ſeen Satan's Sophiſtry in the management of thoſe five grand Topicks, from whence he draws his falſe Concluſions againſt the Children of God, pretending to prove that they are *not Converted*; or at leaſt, if they be in a ſtate of Grace, that they in that ſtate, are in a very bad *unſuitable* condition to it. (For if his Arguments fall ſhort of the *firſt*, they ſeldom miſs the *latter* mark.) This was his firſt Engine. Now follows,

2. The other Engine by which he fixeth theſe Concluſions, which though it be not *Argumentative*, yet it ſerves to *ſharpen* all his Fallacies againſt the Comforts of God's Children; this is *fear*, which together with his Objections he ſends into the Mind. That Satan can raiſe a ſtorm and commotion in the Heart by fear, hath been proved before. I ſhall now only in a few things ſhew, how he doth *forward* his deſign, by aſtoniſhing the Heart with his frightful thundrings.

1. His Objections being accompanied with *Affrightments*, they paſs for *ſtrong* undeniable Arguments, and their Fallacy is not ſo eaſily detected. Fear, as well as Anger, *darkens* Reaſon, and diſables the Underſtanding to make a true faithful *ſearch* into things, or to give a right *judgment*: As Darkneſs deceives the Senſes, and makes every Buſh affrightful to the Paſſenger; or as muddied Waters hinder the ſight: ſo do Fears in the Heart diſable a Man to diſcover the ſillieſt Cheat that Satan can put upon it.

2. They

2. They are alſo very *Credulous*. When Fear is up, any Suggeſtion takes place. As ſuſpitious *Incredulity* is an effect of *Joy*, (the Diſciples at firſt hearing that Chriſt was riſen, *for Joy believed it not*) ſo ſuſpitious *Credulity* is the effect of *Fear*. And we ſhall obſerve ſeveral things in the Servants of God, that ſhew a ſtrange Inclination, as it were a *Natural aptitude* to believe the evil of their Spiritual Eſtate which Satan ſuggeſts to them. As 1. There is a great forwardneſs, and *Precipitancy* in the Heart, to cloſe with evil Thoughts raiſed up in us. When jealouſies of God's Love are injected, there is a violent *Haſtineſs*, forthwith (all calm deliberation being laid aſide) to entertain a belief of it. This is more than once noted in the *Pſalms*. In this caſe, *David* acknowledgeth this haſty Humour; *I ſaid in my haſte*, Pſal. 31. 22. and Pſal. 116. 11. This haſty forwardneſs to determine things that are againſt us, without due examination, *Aſaph* calls a great weakneſs; *This is my Infirmity*, Pſal. 77. 10. 2. There is obſervable in thoſe that are under Spiritual Troubles, a great kind of *Delight*, (if I may ſo call it) to hear *Threatnings* rather than Promiſes; and ſuch Diſcourſes as ſet forth the miſery of a Natural State, rather than ſuch as ſpeak of the Happineſs of the Converted: Becauſe theſe things, in their apprehenſion, are more ſuitable to their Condition, and more needful for them, in order to a *greater* meaſure of Humiliation, which they ſuppoſe to be neceſſary. However, thus they add fuel to the Flame. 3. They have an aptitude to *hide themſelves* from Comfort, and with a wonderful nimbleneſs of Wit and Reaſoning, to evade, and anſwer any Argument brought for their Comfort; as if they had been Volunteers in Satans ſervice, to fight againſt themſelves. 4. They have alſo ſo great a *blaſting* upon their Underſtanding, that Satan's *tempting* them to doubt of their good Eſtate, is to them a ſufficient *reaſon* to doubt of it; and that is Ground enough for them to *deny* it, becauſe Satan *queſtions* it.

3. Theſe Fears make all Satan's ſuggeſtions ſtrike the *deeper*, they point all his Arrows, and make them pierce (as it were) *the Joynts and Marrow*; they poyſon and envenom them to the great *increaſe* of the Torment, and *hinderance* of the Cure; they *bind* the Objections upon them, and *confirm* them in a certain belief that they are all true. We have now viewed Satan's Engines and Batteries againſt the Servants of the Lord, for the deſtuction of their Joy and Peace, by Spiritual Troubles; but theſe are but the

the *beginnings* of sorrows, if compared with those distresses of Soul, which he sometimes brings upon them. Of which next.

CHAP. IX.

Of his fourth way to hinder Peace, by Spiritual Distresses. 1. The Nature of these Distresses, the Ingredients and Degrees of them. Whether all distresses of Soul arise from Melancholy? 2. Satan's method in working them, the Occasions he makes use of, the Arguments he urgeth, the strengthening of them by Fears. 3. Their Weight and Burthen explained in several Particulars. Some concluding Cautions.

THe last sort of Troubles by which Satan overthrows the peace of the Soul, are *Spiritual Distresses*; these are more *grievous* Agonies of Soul, under *deepest* apprehensions of Divine *Wrath*, and *dreadful* Fears of everlasting *Damnation*, differing in *nature* and *degree*, from the former sorts of Troubles; though in these Satan observes much what the same General Method, which he used in Spiritual Troubles last mentioned. For which cause, and also that these are not so common as the other, I shall speak of them with greater Brevity. Herein I shall shew, 1. Their *Nature*. 2. Satan's *Method* in working them. 3. Their *Weight* and Burthen.

1. The Nature of Spiritual Distresses will be best discovered, by a consideration of those *Ingredients* of which they are made up, and of the different *degrees* thereof.

1. As to the Ingredients, there are several things that do concur for the begetting of these violent Distresses. As, 1. There is usually a *Complication* of several *kinds* of Troubles. Sometimes there are *outward* Troubles, and *inward* discomposures of Spirit arising from thence; sometimes *Affrightments* of blasphemous thoughts long continued, and usually *Spiritual* Troubles (in

which their State or Condition have been called to question) have gone before. *Heman* (who is as famous an Instance in this case, as any we meet withal in Scripture) in *Psal.* 88. seems not obscurely to tell us so much; his *Soul* was *full of troubles*, ver. 3. And in *ver.* 7. he complains that God had afflicted him *with all his Waves:* And that these were not all of the same kind (though all concurred to the same end) he himself Explains, *ver.* 8, 18. where he bemoans himself for the unkindness of his Friends: *Thou hast put away mine Acquaintance; Lover and Friend hast thou put far from me.* 2. These Troubles drive at a *further end* than any of the former; for their design was only against the *present Quietness* and Peace of God's Children, but these design the *ruine* of their hopes for the *future*; they are troubled, not for that they are *not Converted*, but for that they expect *never to be Converted.* This is a trouble of an high nature, making them believe that they are *eternally Reprobated*, cut off from God for ever, and under an *impossibility* of Salvation. 3. These troubles have the *consent* and belief of the Party. In some other troubles Satan disquieted the Lords Servants, by *imposing* upon them his own cursed suggestions, violently bearing in upon them temptations to Sin and Blasphemy, or objections against their state of Regeneration, while in the mean time *they opposed* and refused to give consent; but in these Satan prevails with them, to believe that their case is really such as their Fears represent it to be. 4. They are Troubles of a far higher *degree* than the former, the deepest Sorrows, the sharpest Fears, the greatest Agonies. *Heman*, Psal. 88. *ver.* 15, 16. calls them *Terrours* even to *distraction: While I suffer thy Terrours, I am distracted; thy fierce Wrath goeth over me, thy Terrours have cut me off.* 5. There is also God's *deserting* of them in a greater measure than ordinary, by withdrawing his Aids and Comforts. And (as Mr. *Perkins* notes) *If the withdrawing of Grace be joyned with the feeling of God's Anger, thence ariseth the bitterest Conflict, that the Soul of a poor Creature undergoes.*

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2. As to the different *degrees* of Spiritual Distresses, we must observe: That according to the concurrence of *all*, or *fewer* of those Ingredients (for they do not always meet together, though most frequently they do) and according to the *higher*, or *lower* degrees in which these are urged upon the Conscience, or *apprehended* and believed by the troubled Party; these Agonies are more or less, and accordingly we may distinguish them variously. As,

1. Some are desperate Terrours, of *cursed Reprobates* under desperation. These terrours in them, are in the greatest Extremity, the very Pit of Misery, of the same nature with those of the Damned in Hell, *where the Worm that never dies*, is nothing else but the dreadful vexation and torment of an accusing Conscience. They are commonly accompanied with *Blaspheming* of God, and an utter *rejection* of all means for Remedy; and though they sometimes turn to a kind of *secure desperation*, (by which (when they see it will be no better) they *harden* themselves in their Misery, and seek to *divert* their Thoughts) as *Cain* did, betaking himself to the Building of Cities. And *Esau*, when he had sold his Birth-right, despised it, and gave himself up to the pursuit of a Worldly interest; yet sometimes these Terrours end in *Self-Murther*, as in *Judas*, who being smitten with dread of Conscience, went and hanged himself. We have many sad Instances of these desperate Terrours. *Cain* is the first we read of, and though the account the Scriptures give of him be but short, yet 'tis sufficient to let us see what his condition was, *Gen.* 4. 11. to 16. First, He was *cursed from the Earth*. Of this part of his Curse, there were two Branches; 1. That his labour and toyl in Tillage should be *great*, and *greatly* unsuccessful; for thus God himself explains it, *ver.* 12. *When thou tillest the Ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength.* The Earth was cursed with Barrenness before to *Adam*, but now to *Cain* it hath a *double* Curse. 2. That he should be a Man of uncertain abode in any place; *A Fugitive and a Vagabond shalt thou be in the Earth*: Not being able to stay long in a place, by reason of the terrours of his Concience. His own interpretation of it, *ver.* 14. shews, that herein lay a great part of his Misery; *Thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the Earth.* By which it appears, that he was to be as one that was chased out of all Society, and as one that thought himself safe in no place. Secondly, He was *hid from the Face of God*; that is, he was doomed to carry the inward feeling of God's Wrath, without any expectation of Mercy. Thirdly, His mind being terrified under the apprehension of that Wrath, he crys out, That his *Sin was greater* than it could be *pardoned*; or that *his Punishment* was *greater than he could bear*. (For the word in the Original, signifies both Sin, and Punishment.) Take it which way you will, it expresseth a deep horrour of Heart. If in the former sense, then it signi-

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fies a Conviction of the greatneſs of his ſin to *Deſperation*; if in the latter ſenſe, then 'tis no leſs than a blaſphemous *Reflection* upon God, as unjuſtly Cruel. Fourthly, This horrour was ſo great, that he was afraid of all he met with, ſuſpecting every thing to be armed with Divine Vengeance againſt him; *every one that findeth me, ſhall ſlay me.* Or if that ſpeech was a deſire, that any one that found him might Kill him, (as ſome interpret) it ſhews that he preferred Death before that life of Miſery. It ſeems then, that God ſmote him with ſuch Terrour and Conſternation of Mind, and with ſuch affrightful Trembling of Body, for his bloody Fact, that he was weary of himſelf, and afraid of all Men, and could not ſtay long in a Place. By theſe Tokens (or ſome other way) God ſets his *Mark* upon him, as upon a curſed Miſcreant, to be noted and abhorred of all. Such another Inſtance was *Lamech*, of whom the ſame Chapter ſpeaks. 1. The ſting of Conſcience was ſo great, that he is *forced to confeſs* his fault: (The interpretations of thoſe, that take it Interrogatively; *Have I ſlain?* Or, *If I have, what is that to you?* &c. are upon many accounts improper; much more are thoſe ſo, that take it Negatively). Which, whether it were the abomination of *Poligamy*, (as ſome think) by which Example he had deſtroyed more than *Cain* did; or if it were *Murther* in a proper ſenſe (as the Words and Context plainly carry it) 'tis not very material to our purpoſe; however God ſmote him with Horrour, that he might be a witneſs againſt himſelf. 2. He accuſeth himſelf for a more grievous Sinner, and more deſperate Wretch by far than *Cain: If* Cain (ver. 24.) *ſhall be avenged ſeven-fold, truly* Lamech *ſeventy and ſeven-fold.* Which is as much as to ſay, that there was as much difference 'twixt his Sin and *Cain*'s, as betwixt ſeven, and ſeventy ſeven. 3. It ſeems alſo by his Diſcourſe to his Wives, that he was grievouſly perplexed with *inward fears*; ſuſpecting (it may be) his very Wives (as well as others) might have private Combinations againſt him, for the prevention whereof, he tells them by *Cain's* example of God's avenging him. Theſe two early examples of Deſperation the beginning of the World affords, and there have been many more ſince, as *Eſau* and *Judas*. Of late Years we have the Memorable Inſtance of *Francis Spira*, one of the cleareſt and moſt remarkable Examples of Spiritual Horrour, that the latter Ages of the World were ever acquainted with; yet I ſhall not dare to

Lightfoot Harm in loc.

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be confident of his Reprobation, as of *Cain*'s and *Judas*'s, because the Scripture hath determined their case, but we have no such certain authority to determine his.

2. There are also Distresses from *Melancholy*, which may be further differenced according to the intenseness, or remisness of the Distemper upon which they depend. For sometimes the *Imagination* is so exceedingly depraved, the *fears* of Heart so great, and the *sorrows* so deep, that the Melancholy Person crying out of himself, that he is Damned, under the Curse of God, &c. appears to be wholly *besides himself*; and his Anguish to be nothing else, but a *delirous irrational disturbance*. There are too many sad Instances of this: Some I have known, that for many Years together, have laboured under such apprehensions of Hell and Damnation, that they have at last proceeded to Curse, and Blaspheme God in a most dreadful manner; so that they have been a Terrour to all their Friends and Acquaintance. And though sometimes they would fall into fits of *obstinate silence*, yet being urged to speak, they would amaze all that were about them, with the confident averment of their Damnation; with horrible out-crys of their supposed Misery and Torments, and with terrible rage against Heaven. Some in this Distemper, will fancy themselves to be in *Hell already*, and will discourse as if they saw the Devils about them, and felt their Torture. Such as these give plain discovery by their *whole Carriage* under their Trouble, and some *concomitant false Imaginations* about other things, (as when they fancy themselves to be in Prison, or Sentenced to Death, and that Torments, or Fire, are provided for them by the Magistrate, &c.) that 'tis only Melancholy (perverting their understanding) that is the cause of all their Sorrow. Others there are, who are not *altogether* Irrational, because in most *other* things their understanding is *right*; yet being driven into Melancholy upon the occasion of Crosses, or other outward Afflictions, they at last fix all their thoughts upon their Souls, and now their fancy becoming Irregular in part, the whole of the Irregularity appears only in that, wherein they chiefly concern themselves. Hence they misjudg themselves, and condemn themselves to everlasting Destruction; sometimes without any *apparent* cause, and sometimes they accuse themselves of such things as they *never did*; they fear and cry out they are Damned, but they cannot give a particular *reason*, why they should entertain these fears, neither can they shew

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any cause why they should refuse the Comforts of the Promises that are offered, but they say, they know, or are perswaded it is so; upon no better account than this, *It is so, because it is so.* Or if they give reasons of their Imagination, they are commonly either *feigned*, or *frivolous*, and yet in all other matters they are *Rational*, and speak or act like Men in their right Minds. Of both these kinds of Desperation I shall speak nothing further; 'tis enough to have noted that such there are, because the Cure of the former is *impossible*, and the Cure of the latter doth wholly depend upon *Physick*.

Quest. Some may possibly *question*, Whether all *extraordinary* Agonies of Soul, upon the apprehension of *eternal Damnation*, be not the fruits of *Melancholy*? and if not, then what may the *difference* be betwixt those that proceed from Melancholy, and those that are properly the Terrours of Conscience?

Answ. As to the first part of the Question, I *answer*, 1. That *all* Spiritual Distresses, *are not* to be ascribed to Melancholy. For, 1. There are some Melancholy Persons who are never *more free* from Spiritual Troubles (though frequently accustomed to them at other times) than when (upon the occasion of some special Trouble, or Sickness, threatning Death) there is *greatest cause* to fear such onsets upon the *increase* of Melancholy; some such I have known. 2. Sometimes these Distresses come *suddenly*, their Conscience smiting them in the very *act* of Sin; and these Persons sometime such, as are not of a *Melancholick Constitution*. *Spira* was suddenly thunder-struck with Terrours of Conscience, upon his Recantation of some Truths which he held; and so were some of the *Martyrs*. Sometimes Terrours that have continued *long*, and have been very *fierce*, are removed in a *moment*. Now, 'tis not rational to say, that Melancholy only occasioned all such Troubles, where in Bodies that are not *naturally* of that Complexion, (and some such have been surprised with terrours of Conscience): if we will take a liberty to suppose an *accidental Melancholy*, we must of necessity allow *some* time; and (usually) some *precedaneous occasion*, to mould them into such a Distemper. Neither do the *fears* of Melancholy cease on a *sudden*, but abate *gradually*, according to the gradual abatement of the Humour. To say that *Cain*'s, or *Judas*'s dispair were the invasions of strong Melancholy, is not only beyond all *Proof*, but also *Probability*. Neither is it likely that *David* (whose *ruddy* Countenance, and Inclination to *Musick*, are tokens of a Sanguine Complexion)

plexion) was *always* Melancholick under his frequent complaints of Spiritual Trouble.

4. They that read the ſtory of *Spira*, and obſerve his *rational ſerious* Replies, to the Diſcourſes that were offered him for his Comfort, and his Carriage all along, will have no cauſe to conclude his Trouble to be *only* Melancholy; neither did the ſober judicious By-ſtanders aſcribe his Diſtreſs to any ſuch cauſe.

5. The Agony of *Chriſt* upon the Croſs, under the ſenſe of Divine Wrath for our Sins, (though it were *without Deſperation*) is an undeniable Proof, that there may be *deep ſenſe* of God's *Diſpleaſure* upon the Soul of Man; which cannot be aſcribed to Melancholy.

2. I anſwer, That it is not to be denied, but that God *may* make uſe of that Humour as his *Inſtrument*, for the increaſe and continuance of Terrours upon the Conſciences of thoſe, whom he thinks fit to Puniſh (for any provocation) with Spiritual Deſertion. As he made uſe of that Diſtemper to puniſh *Saul* and *Nebuchadnezzar*. I ſpeak not here of thoſe Diſtreſſes which are *nothing elſe* but Melancholy, (ſuch as thoſe before mentioned, of which Phyſicians have given us frequent Hiſtories) though in this caſe, the ſecret ways of God's Providences are to be adored with humble ſilence; but of thoſe Terrours of Conſcience which have a *mixture* of Melancholy to help them forward, yet ſo, as that the Judgment and Reaſon are not thereby *perverted*. *Spira*, when his Caſe was haſtily concluded, by an injudicious Friend, to be a ſtrong Melancholy, made this reply: *Well, be it ſo, ſeeing you will needs have it ſo; for thus alſo is God's Wrath manifeſted againſt me.*— Which ſhews, 1. That he believed, God doth *ſometimes* manifeſt his Wrath againſt Man by Melancholy. And, 2. That he denied this to be *his condition*: For he ſtill concluded, that God ſent the Terrours of his Wrath *immediately* upon his Conſcience, as the Sentence of his juſt Condemnation, for denying Chriſt. Now when God doth make uſe of Melancholy, as his Inſtrument in Satan's hand, to make the Soul of Man more apprehenſive of his ſin and God's Wrath, (though he doth not always make uſe of this means, as hath been ſaid) while he ſtill preſerves the Underſtanding from falſe *Imaginations*. The Diſtreſs is ſtill *Rational*, and we have no cauſe to make any great difference betwixt theſe Troubles that have ſuch a mixture of Melancholy, and ſuch as have not. Neither muſt we ſay, That then 'tis in the power of the

Vid. Fel. Plateri obſerv. lib. 1. in mentis alienatione.

the *Physician* to remove, or mitigate ſuch Spiritual Diſtreſſes. For if God ſee it fit to make uſe of Melancholy for ſuch a purpoſe, he can *ſuſpend* the power of Phyſick, ſo that it ſhall not do its work till God hath performed all his Purpoſe. And the *unſucceſsfulneſs* of Remedies in this Diſtemper, (while it ſeems to be wonderfully ſtubborn, in reſiſting all that can be done for Cure) is more to be aſcribed (in ſome caſes) to *God's Deſign*, than every Phyſician doth imagine.

As to the *latter* part of the Queſtion. How the Terrours of Melancholy, and thoſe of Conſcience are to be *diſtinguiſhed*, I ſhall only ſay this: That (as I ſaid) we are not much concerned to make *any diſtinction*, where the Diſtreſſed Party acts *rationally*. 'Tis true, *ſomething* may be obſerved from theſe *mixtures* of Melancholy; and thence may ſome *Indications* be taken by the Friends of the Diſtreſſed, which may be of uſe to the Afflicted Party. *Phyſick* in this caſe is not to be neglected, becauſe (though God may permit that Diſtemper in order to the Terrour of the Conſcience) we are not of God's Counſel, to know *how high* he would have it to go, nor *how long* to continue; but 'tis our duty (with ſubmiſſion to him) to uſe all means for help. However, ſeeing the *Phyſician* is the only *proper Judg* of the Bodily Diſtemper, it were improper to ſpeak of the Signs of Melancholy in theſe *mixt caſes*, to thoſe that cannot make uſe of them. And as for theſe Diſtreſſes of Melancholy that are *Irrational*, they are of themſelves ſo notorious, that I need not give any account of them. There is uſually a *Conſtitution* inclining that way, and often the *Parents*, or Friends of the Party, have been handled in the ſame manner before; or if their Natural Temper do not lead them that way, there is uſually ſome Croſs, Trouble, Diſappointment, or the like outward Affliction that hath firſt preſſed them heavily, and by degrees hath wrought them into Melancholy, and then afterward they come to concern themſelves for their Souls. (As that Woman in *Platers* Obſervations, who being long grieved with Jealouſie upon Grounds too juſt, at laſt fell into grievous diſpair, crying out; *That God would not Pardon her*; *that ſhe was Damned*; *that ſhe felt Hell already, and the Torments of it*, &c.) Or there are ſome *Concomitant Delirium*'s, imaginations apparently abſurd, or falſe, &c. all which give plain diſcoveries of Irrational Diſtreſſes. And if there remained any doubt concerning them, the conſideration of *all Circumſtances* together,

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together, by such as are Sober and Judicious, would easily afford a satisfaction.

3. Having now confined the Discourse to the *Spiritual Distresses* of God's Children, that are not so oppressed with Melancholy, as to be misled with false Imaginations; I must next, concerning these Distresses, offer another observable *Distinction*, which is this: That they are either made up of *all the five* forementioned Ingredients, or only of *some of them*, and so may be called *Total*, or *Partial*; though in each of these there may be great differences of Degrees. 1. Sometimes then the Children of God may be brought into *Total* Distresses of Conscience, even with *Desperation*, and (that which is more hideous) with *Blasphemy*. If Mr. *Perkins* his Observation hold true, who tells us, *That they may be so over-charged with Sorrow, as to cry out they are damned, and to blaspheme God.* And we have no reason to contradict it, when we observe how far *David* went in his haste, more than once. And whatever may be the *private* differences betwixt these and the Reprobates, in their Agonies (as differences there are, both in *God's Design*, and *their Hearts*, though not visible) yet if we compare the Fears, Troubles, and Speeches of the one and the other together, there appears *little* or no difference which By-standers can certainly fix upon. If it seems harsh to any, that so horrid a thing as *Despair* should be charged upon the *Elect of God*, in the *worst* of their Distresses, it will readily be answered; 1. That if we *suppose not* this, we must suppose that which *is worse*. If we like not to say, that God's *Children* may fall *into Despair*; we must conclude (very uncharitably) that they *that fall* into Despair, are not God's Children. 2. 'Tis easie to imagine a difference betwixt *Partial* and *Total* Dispair, betwixt *Imaginary* and *Real*. The Children of God, under strong perturbation of Spirit, may imagine themselves to do what they do not, and so may bear *false Witness* against themselves; professing that all their hope of Salvation is lost, when yet the *Root* of their hope may still remain in their Hearts *undiscovered*. The *habit* may be there, when all visible *Acts* of it are at *present* suspended, or so disguised in a croud of confused Expressions, that they cannot be known. Or, if they have *real distrust* of their Salvation, yet every *fit* of real Diffidence, is not *utter Desperateness*; neither will it denominate a Man to be *totally desperate*, any more than every *Error*, even about *Fundamentals*, will denominate a Man an *Heretick*. For as it

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it must be a *pertinacious* Error in *Fundamentals* that makes an Heretick, so it must be a *pertinacious Diffidence* that makes a Man truly desperate. 3. But sometimes the Children of God have only *Partial* Distresses. That is, they may have a great measure of *some* of the Ingredients, without mixture of the rest. Particularly, they may have a great measure of the *sense of Divine Wrath* and Desertion, *without Desperation*. The possibility of this is evident, beyond exception, in the Example of our Blessed Saviour, when he cry'd out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* None can ascribe Desperation to him, without Blasphemy; and if they should, the very words, *My God, my God,* (expressing his full and certain *hope*) do expresly contradict them. Such an instance, of Spiritual Distress *without Desperation*, I take *Heman* to be. How high his Troubles were, is abundantly testified in *Psal.* 88. and yet that his hope was *not lost*, appears not only by his *Prayer* for relief in the general; (for Hope is not utterly destroyed, where the appointed means for help are carefully used,) but by the particular *avouchment* of his Hope in God, in the first verses of that Psalm, *O Lord God of my Salvation, I have cried day and night before thee.*

4. The last difference of Spiritual Distresses which I shall observe, is this; That some are more *Transient fits* and *flashes* of Terror, under a *present Temptation*, which endure not long; others are more *fixed* and permanent. The *less* durable Distresses may be *violent* and sharp, while they hold. Temptations of Diffidence may strongly possess a Child of God, and at first may *not be repelled*; and then before their Faith can recover it self, they vent their present sad apprehensions of their Estate, as *Jonah* did, Jon. 2.4. *I said I am cast out of thy sight.* Many such fits *David* had, and in them, complained at this rate, *Why hast thou forsaken me? Why castest thou off my Soul?* Psal.31.32. *I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine Eyes.* Psal. 116. 11. *I said in my haste, all Men are Lyars.* Which was a great height of Distrust, and too boldly reflecting upon God's Faithfulness, considering the *special* Promises that God had made to him. Such sharp fits were those of *Bainham*, and *Bilney*, Martyrs, whose Consciences were so sorely wounded for Recanting the Truth which they professed, that they seemed to feel a very *Hell* within them.

The more *fixed* Distresses, as they are of *longer* continuance, so they are often accompanied with the very *worst Symptomes*: For when

when in these Agonies, *no Sun nor Star of comfort appears to them for many days, all hope that they shall be saved seems to be taken away*; and being *tired out* with Complaints and Importunities, without any Answer, they at last reject the use of Means. Some have lain many Years (as the *Paralytick* Man at the Pool of *Bethesda*) without Cure. Some from their Youth up, as *Heman* complains. Some carry their Distresses to their *Death-Bed*, and it may be, are not eased till their Souls are ready to depart out of their Bodies, and then they often end *suddenly* and *comfortably*. Some, I could tell you of, who on their Death-Bed after grievous Terrours, and many Out-crys, concerning their miseries of *Blackness and Darkness for ever*, lay long silent; and then on a sudden brake out into Raptures of Joy, and adoring Admiration, of the Goodness of God, using that speech of the Apostle, *Rom.* 11.33. *O the depth of the riches, both of the Wisdom and knowledg of God! how unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!* Others go out of the World in *Darkness*, without any appearance of Comfort: Such an Instance was Mr. *Chambers*, (as the story of his Death testifies) mentioned by Mr. *Perkins*, in his Treatise of Desertions, of whom this account is given; that in great Agonies he cried out, *he was Damned*, and so died. The case of such is surely very sad to themselves, and appears no less to others; yet we must take heed of judging rashly concerning such. Nay, if their former Course of Life hath been *uniformly good*, (for who will reject a fine Web of Cloth (as one speaks) for a little course List at the end,) especially if there be any obscure appearance of hope. (As that Expression of Mr. *Chambers*, [*O that I had but one drop of Faith!*] is by Mr. *Perkins* supposed to be); we ought to judg the best of them. We have seen the nature of Spiritual Distresses, in the Ingredients and Differences thereof. We are now to Consider,

2. Satan's method in procuring them: Which consists, 1. In the *Occasions* which he lays hold on for that end. 2. In the *Arguments* which he useth. 3. In the working up of their *Fears*, by which he confirms Men in them.

1. As to the Occasions: He follows much the *same Course* which hath been described before in Spiritual Troubles; so that I need not say much, only I shall note *two* things. 1. That it makes much for Satan's purpose, if the Party against whom he designs, have faln into some *grievous sins*. Sins of *common* Mag-

nitude, do not lay a foundation suitable to the Superstructure which he intends; he cannot plausibly argue *Reprobation*, or *Damnation* from every *ordinary* sin; but if he finds them guilty of something extraordinary, then he falls to work with his Accusations. The most usual sins which he takes advantage from, are (as Mr. *Perkins* observes) those against the *Third*, *Sixth*, and *Seventh* Command; sometimes those against the *Ninth*. Murther, Adultery, Perjury, and the wilful denial of Truth against Conscience, are the Crimes upon which he grounds his Charge, but most usually the last. Upon this the distressed *Spira*, and some of the *Martyrs*. As for the other, the more *private* they are, Satan hath oft the *more* advantage against them, because God's secret and just Judgment, will by this means *bring to Light the hidden things of Darkness*; and force their Consciences to accuse them, of that which no Man could lay to their Charge, that he might manifest himself to be *the searcher of the Hearts, and trier of the Reins*. Thus have many been forced to disclose private Murthers, secret Adulteries, and to Vomit up (though with much pain and torture) that which they have by Perjury, or Guile, extorted from others.

2. Where Satan hath not these particular Advantages, he doth endeavour to prepare Men for Distresses, by *other* Troubles *long continued*. All men that are brought to dispair of their Happiness, must not be supposed to be *greater Sinners* than others; some are distressed with fears of Eternal Damnation, that are in a good measure able to make *Job*'s protestation in these cases: That their *Heart hath not been deceived by a Woman*: That they *have not laid wait at their Neighbours door*: That they *have not lift up their hand against the Fatherless, when they saw their help in the Gate; that their Land doth not cry against them, nor the Furrows thereof complain; that when they saw the Sun when it shined, or the Moon walking in brightness, their Heart hath not been secretly enticed, nor their Mouth kissed their Hand; that they rejoyced not in the destruction of him that hated them, nor lift up themselves when evil found him*, &c. Notwithstanding all which their Fears are upon, and prevail against them. But then before Satan can bring them to consent to such dismal Conclusions against themselves, they must be *extraordinarily fitted* to take the Impression; either *tired* out under *great* Afflictions, or *long* exercised with *Fears* about their Spiritual Estates, without intermixture of Comfort, or Ease, or their Faculties *broken* and weakned by Melancholy. Any of these give him

Job 31. 9 &c.

him an advantage *equivalent* to that of *great Sins*. For though he cannot ſay to theſe, your ſins are ſo Enormous, that they are (conſidered themſelves together with their Circumſtances) *ſad ſigns* of Reprobation; yet he will plead that *God's carriage* towards them, doth plainly diſcover that he hath wholly caſt them off, and left them to themſelves, without hope of Mercy.

2. As for the *Arguments* which he uſeth, they are much-what from the ſame *Topicks* which he maketh choice of in bringing on Spiritual Troubles. Only as he aims at the Proof of a great deal more againſt God's Children, than that they are not Converted; ſo accordingly he ſcrues up his *Mediums* for proof to an higher pin. His Arguments are,

1. From *Scriptures wreſted*, or miſapplied. His choice of Scriptures for this purpoſe, is of ſuch places as either ſeem to ſpeak moſt ſadly the dangerous and fearful Eſtate of Men, according to the *firſt view* and literal repreſentation of them, through the unskilfulneſs of thoſe that are to be concerned; Or of ſuch places as do *really* ſignifie the miſerable Unhappineſs of ſome Perſons, who through their own fault, have been cut off from all hope, and the poſſibility of the like to ſome others for the future. So that in framing Arguments from Scripture, the Devil uſeth *a twofold* cunning. 1. There are ſome Scriptures which have the word *Damnation* in them, applied to ſome *particular Acts* and Miſcarriages of Men; when yet their *intendment* is not ſuch as the word ſeems to ſound, or as he would make them to believe. Now, when he catcheth a Child of God in ſuch acts as are there ſpecified, (if he finds that his Ignorance, or Timerouſneſs is ſuch, as may render the Temptation feazible) he preſently applies Damnation to them by the authority of thoſe Texts. For inſtance, that Text of *Rom.* 14.23. hath been frequently abuſed to that end; *He that doubteth, is Damned if he eat.* —— The word *Damned* there, ſtrikes deep with a weak troubled Chriſtian, that is not skilful in the Word of Righteouſneſs. For whether Satan apply it to *Sacramental eating* (as ſometimes he doth to the Ignorant, though contrary to the purpoſe of the Text,) or to *Doubting* in the general, he makes this concluſion out of it: *Thou doubteſt, or thou haſt eaten the Sacrament doubtingly, therefore there is no hope for thee; thou art Damned.* Whereas all this while, the Devil doth but play the Sophiſter in the abuſe of the *ſignification* of words. For that Scripture evidently relates

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to the *difference* that then was in the Church, about eating those Meats that were unclean by *Moses*'s Law: In which case the Apostle doth positively declare, that the difference betwixt clean and unclean Meats, is taken away; so that a Christian might with all freedom imaginable, eat those Meats that were formerly unclean, with this *Proviso*, that he were *fully perswaded in his own mind*. The necessity of which satisfaction, he proves from this, That otherwise he should offend his own Conscience, which in that case must needs *Condemn* him (and that's the Damnation that is there spoken of); as is more evident by comparing this Verse with the next foregoing; *Happy is he that Condemneth not himself*. But he that doubteth, doth *Condemn* himself, because *he eats not of Faith*; that is, from *full perswasion* of the lawfulness of the thing. This Scripture then hath nothing at all in it, to the purpose for which Satan brings it; It doth not speak of any *finall sentence* of Condemnation passed upon a Man for such an Act; all, and the utmost that it saith, is only this, That it is *a sin* to go against the perswasion of Conscience, and consequently it puts no Man further off Salvation, than any *other* sin may do; for which, upon repentance, the Sinner may be pardoned.

Another Text which Satan hath frequently abused, to the very great prejudice of many, is that of 1 *Cor.* 11. 29. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself*. With this Scripture he insults over the humble fearful Christian, who is sensible of his unworthiness of so great a Priviledg. Sometimes he keeps him off long from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, upon this very score; That such an unworthy Wretch ought not to make such near and familiar approaches to Christ. And if at last he is perswaded to partake of this Ordinance, then (taking the advantage of the Parties Consciousness of his great Vileness, and the very low thoughts which he entertains of himself) he endeavours to perswade him, that now he hath *destroyed himself for ever*, and run upon his own irrecoverable Damnation. Thus he pleads it; *Can any thing be more plain, than that thou hast eaten and drunken unworthily? Thy own Conscience tells thee so: and can any thing be more positively asserted than this, that he that doth so, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself? What then canst thou think of thy self, but that thou art a damned Wretch?* Neither do I speak barely, what may be supposed Satan *would say* in this matter, but what may be proved by

many

many Instances he *hath said* and urged upon the Consciences of the Weak, who have from hence concluded (to the great distress of their Souls) that by unworthy receiving of the Sacrament, they have sealed up their own Condemnation; and all this by abusing and *perverting* the sense of this Text. For the unworthy receiving, doth relate to the Miscarriages which he *had taxed* before, and it implies a *careless*, *prophane eating*; such as might plainly express the small, or unworthy esteem that they had in their Hearts for that Ordinance. And the *Damnation* there threatned, is not *finall* and irrecoverable Damnation, but *Temporal Judgment*; as the Apostle himself doth explain it, in the next Verses: *For this cause many are sickly.*—— *And if we would judg our selves, we should not be judged.*—— That is (as he further explains it) we should not be thus Chastned, or Afflicted; and the word translated *Damnation*, doth signifie Judgment. At the furthest, if we should take it for the Condemnation of Hell, all that is threatned would be no more than this; That such have *deserved*, and God in Justice might inflict the Condemnation of Hell for such an offence: Which is not only true of *this sin*, but of *all others*, which still do admit of the *exception* of Repentance. All this while this is nothing to the poor humbled Sinner, that judgeth himself unworthy in his most serious Examination, and greatest Diligence. Satan here plays upon the unexactness of the Translation, and the ignorance of the Party in *Criticisms*; for 'tis not every one that can readily answer such *Captious* Arguments. 2. But he hath another piece of Cunning, which is this: He doth by a figular kind of Art, *threap* upon Men some Scripture that really speaks of Eternal Condemnation, without any sufficient evidence in *matter of Fact* for the due application of them, only because they *cannot prove* the contrary. His proceeding herein is to this purpose: First, (After he hath prepared his way, by forming their minds to a fearful suspition of their Estate) he sets before them such Scriptures as these; God *hardned the heart of Pharaoh*: He hath prepared *Vessels of Wrath, fitted for Destruction*. Christ prayed not *for the World*: And that concerning the *Jews*, *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardned their hearts*, Secondly, He confidently *affirms*, that they are such. Thirdly, He puts *them* to prove the contrary, and herein he sends them to the search of God's *Eternal Decrees*; in which Art, Satan (like an *Ignis fatuus*) leads them out of the way. And though he cannot

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not possibly *determine* what he affirms, he shifts off the *positive proof* from himself, and leaves it upon them to make out, that they *are not thus determined of* by God's unchangeable purpose. And because the tempted (under so great a Cloud) have no such *perswasion* of their present Graces, as may enable them to make *sure their Election*, by the Fruits of their *Vocation*, they are beaten off from their hold, and are brought to believe that the Argument is unanswerable: Because they cannot say *they are Converted*, they conclude they *must be Damned*; overlooking the true Answer that they might make, by keeping close to the *Possibility*, or *Probability* that they *may be* Converted, and so escape the Damnation of Hell. This *general hope* being of such high concern to the distressed, (for 'tis the first thing that must relieve them, till better Evidence come in) it is Satan's great policy to Cheat them of it, which he often doth by this Method now declared.

2. Satan doth mainly endeavour to *misrepresent* God to troubled Souls, and from thence he draweth out Arguments against them. In the former case of *Spiritual Troubles*, he misrepresents God, in that he represents only some Attributes of his, not only *distinct* from, but in *opposition* to others, by which he labours to conceal the sweet and beautiful *Harmony* that is among them; and also to make one Attribute, an Argument against the comfortable supporting Considerations, which another would afford. He insists upon God's Justice without respect of Mercy, upon his Holiness, without any regard of his Gracious Condescentions to the Infirmities of the Weak. But when it is his business to bring any under Spiritual *Distresses*, he then misrepresents God at an *higher rate*, and sticks not to asperse him with abominable *Falshoods*. There are two Lies which he commonly urgeth at this time.

1. He represents God as a *Cruel Tyrant*, of a rigorous unmerciful Disposition, that delights himself in the Ruine and Misery of Men. To this purpose he rakes together the *harshest* passages of the Scripture, that speak of God's just *Severity* against the *wilful* obstinate Sinners, that stubbornly contemn his offers of Grace. God indeed hath cleared himself of this Aspersion, by Solemn *Oath*, Ezek. 33. 11. *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his way and live.* Yet the Tempted will sooner believe Satan's

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Suggestion than God's *Oath*; partly because the sense of their *Vileness* doth secretly sway them to think, there is *Reason* that he should be so; partly because their *Fears* incline them to suspect the *worst*; and partly the uneasie tossings of their Mind long continued, reviveth the natural *frowardness* of the spirit against God. Which, how apt it is (when fretted with Vexation) to entertain harsh thoughts of God? May be seen in the answer of the slothful Servant to his Lord, who returned his Talent back again unimproved, with a *Reflection:* Importing that his Master was such as none could please; so Severe, that he was discouraged from making any attempt of serving him acceptably, *Mat.*25.24. He said, *Lord, I know thee that thou art an hard Man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed.*

2. He belies God further, by representing him as *designing* the Ruine and Misery of the Tempted Person in particular. He would make him believe that God had a *particular spleen* (as it were) against him above other Men; and that in all his dealings with, or concerning him, he is but as a *Bear lying in wait, and as a Lyon in secret places*, ready to take any advantage to cut him off. And accordingly he gives no other Interpretation of all the Ways of God, but such as make them look like Tokens of *finall* Rejection of those that are concerned in them. If there be upon them outward *Afflictions*, he tells them, these are but the *Forerunners* of Hell: If they lie under inward *sense of Wrath*, he calls that the *First-fruits* of everlasting Vengeance: If any particular *Threatning* be impressed upon their Consciences by the Spirit of God, in order to their Humiliation and Repentance; he represents it as God's *final Sentence*, and absolute Determination against them. If for Caution, God see it fit to set before them the *Examples* of his Wrath, (as it is very frequent for him to do, lest we *should fall after the same example of Unbelief*, 1 Pet. 2.6. 1 Cor.10.6.) Satan perverts this to that which God never intended, for he boldly asserts, that these Examples *prognosticate* their Misery; and that God signifies by them, a Prediction of certain unavoidable Unhappiness.

This must be observed here, That these misrepresentations of God, are none of Satan's *primary* Arguments; he useth them only as *fresh Reserves* to second others. For where he finds any Wing of his *Batalions* ready to be beaten, he comes up with these Supplies to relieve them. For indeed, these Considerations of

God's Severity in the General, or of his ſpecial Reſolve againſt any in Particular, are not of force ſufficient to *Attaque* a Soul, that is within the *Trenches* of preſent Peace; they are not of themſelves proper *Mediums* to produce ſuch a Concluſion. Though we ſuppoſe God ſevere, (except we ſhould imagine him to be an *hater* of Mankind *univerſally*) we cannot thence infer the final Ruine of this, or that *individual* Perſon. And beſides, (that theſe are *unjuſtifiable* Falſhoods) they cannot make the final Damnation of any one ſo much as *probable*, till the Heart be firſt *weakned* in its hopes, by Fears, or Doubtings, raiſed up in it upon other Grounds. Then indeed Men are ſtaggered, either by the deep ſenſe of their Unworthineſs, or ſome ſad continuing Calamity, and the ſeeming neglect of their Prayers. If Satan then tell them of God's Severity, or that (all his Providences conſidered) he hath ſet them up as a *Mark for the Arrows of his Indignation*, they are ready to believe his Report, it being ſo ſuitable to their preſent ſence and feeling.

3. Satan alſo fetcheth Arguments from the *Sins* of God's Children, but his great Art in this is by unjuſt aggravations to make them look like thoſe Offences; which by *ſpecial exception* in Scripture, are excluded from Pardon. The Apoſtle, 1 *John* 5.16. tells us of a *Sin that is unto Death*; that is, a ſin which if a Man commits, he cannot eſcape Eternal Death, and therefore he would not have ſuch a Sinner prayed for. (That the Popiſh diſtinction of *Venial* and *Mortal* Sins is not here intended, ſome of the Papiſts themſelves do confeſs). What he means by that ſin he doth not tell us, it being a thing known ſufficiently from other Scriptures. The note of *unpardonableneſs*, is indeed affixed to ſins under *ſeveral Denominations*; the *ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, Chriſt pronounceth *unpardonable*, Mat. 12, 31. *Total Apoſtacy* from the Truth of the Goſpel, hath no leſs ſaid of it by the Apoſtle, when he calls it *a drawing back to Perdition*, Heb. 10. 39. Whether theſe be all one, or whether there is any other *Species* of ſin irremiſſible, beſides that againſt the Holy Ghoſt, 'tis not to our purpoſe to make enquiry. What-ever they are in themſelves, Satan in this matter, makes uſe of the Texts that ſpeak of them diſtinctly; as we ſhall preſently ſee. But beſides theſe, the Scriptures ſpeak of ſome, that were *given up to vile Affections, and to a reprobate Mind*, Rom. 1. 26, 28. And of others that were given up *to hardneſs of Heart*, Mat. 13. 14. Acts 28. 26.

Lorinus in loc. Barth. Petrus in loc.

Now

Now, whoſoever they are of whom theſe things may be juſtly affirmed, they are certainly miſerable, hopeleſs Wretches. Here then is Satans cunning, if he can make any Ghild of God believe that he hath done any *ſuch Act*, or Acts of Sin, as may bring him within the *compaſs* of theſe Scriptures, then he inſults over them, and tells them over and over again, that they are cut off for ever.

To this purpoſe he aggravates all their ſins. And, 1. If he find them guilty of any *great Iniquity*, he fixeth upon that, and labours all he can to make it look moſt *deſperately*, that ſo he may call it the *Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*; and in this he hath a mighty advantage, that moſt Men are in the *Dark* about that ſin: All Men being not yet agreed whether it be a *diſtinct Species* of Sin, or an *higher degree* of wilfulneſs relating to any particular Sin. Upon this ſcore, Satan can lay the Charge of this ſin, upon thoſe that *Apoſtatize* from the Truth, and through Weakneſs have *Recanted* it. (Thus he dealt with *Spira*, with *Bilney*, with *Bainham*, and ſeveral others.) There is ſo near a reſemblance in theſe ſins of denying Truths, to what is ſaid of the Unpardonable Sin, that theſe Men though they were *Scholars*, and Men of *good Abilities*, yet they were not able to anſwer the Argument that the Devil urged againſt them, but it prevailed to diſtreſs them. Upon others alſo, hath Satan the advantage to fix this Accuſation: For let the *Species* of the ſin be what it will, if they have any thing of that Notion, that the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, is a *preſumptuous Act* of Sin, under Temptation, they will call any *notorious Crime*, the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe of the more remarkable aggravating *Circumſtances* that have accompanied ſuch a Fact. 2. He aggravates the Sins of God's Children from the Wilfulneſs of their ſinning. 'Tis a thing often too true, that a Child of God may be carried by a *violent Impetus*, or ſtrong inclination of Affection to ſome particular Iniquity, where the *forwardneſs* of deſires that way, by a ſudden haſte, do *ſtifle* thoſe Reluctancies of Mind, which may be expected from one endowed with the Spirit of God; whoſe power upon them, doth ordinarily ſway them, *to luſt againſt the Fleſh*. But it is more ordinary to find a Temptation to prevail, notwithſtanding that an enlightned Mind doth make *ſome Reſiſtance*; which (becauſe 'tis too feeble) is eaſily born down by the ſtrong *importunities* of Satan, working upon the inclinations

of the Flesh. *Both* these Cases are improved against them, over whom Satan hath got any advantage of doubting of their Estate. If they have resisted but *ineffectually*, or *not resisted* at all, he chargeth them with the *highest* Wilfulness, and will so aggravate the matter that they shall be put in fear, not only that there can be *no Grace* (where Sin hath so much power as either to *controul* so much light and endeavours, or hath so *subjected* the Heart to its dominion, that it can command *without* a contradiction) but that they can have *no Hope*; that they that sin with so high an hand, should ever enter into God's Rest. And to this purpose he commonly sets before them, that Text of *Heb.* 10.26. *If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledg of the Truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for sins.* Or that of *Heb.* 6. 4. *It is impossible for those who were once enlightned—— if they fall away, to renew them again to Repentance.* Both which places speak indeed, at least, such a *difficulty*, as in common use of speech, is called an *impossibility*, if not an utter *absolute* impossibility of Repentance and Pardon. But then the *sinning wilfully*, or *falling away*, there mentioned, is only that of *Total Apostacy*; when Men that have embraced the Gospel, and by it have met with such impressions of Power, and delight upon their Hearts, which we usually call *Common Grace*, do notwithstanding, reject that Gospel as *false* and fabulous, and so rise up against it, with Scorn and utmost Contempt; as *Julian* the Apostate did. If now the true intendment of those Scriptures were considered, by those that are distressed with them, they might presently see, that they were put into fear, where *no such cause* of fear was. But all Men have not this knowledg, nor do they so duely attend to the matter of the Apostles Discourse, as to be able to put a right Interpretation upon it; upon such Satan imposeth his deceitful gloss, and tells them: *Wilful sinners cannot be restored to Repentance, but you have sinned wilfully; when sin was before you, you rushed into it without any consideration; as the Horse into the Battel: or when God stood in your way with Commands, and advice to the contrary; when your Consciences warned you not to do so great wickedness, yet you would do it. You were as those that break the Yoke, and burst the Bonds.* Upon this supposition, that these Texts speak of *wilful* sinning in the General; How little can be said against Satan's Argument? How many have I known, that have been tortured with these Texts, judging their Estate fearful, because

of their wilfulneſs in ſinning? Who upon the breaking of the *ſnare* of Satan's *miſrepreſentation*, have eſcaped *as a Bird unto the Hill.* 3. When either of the *two* former Ways will not ſerve the turn, (that is, when he meets with ſuch againſt whom he hath nothing of notorious wickedneſs to object, or ſuch as have a better diſcerning of Scripture, than ſo to be impoſed upon,) he labours to make a Charge againſt them, from the *number* of their Miſcarriages. Here he takes up all the filth he can, and lays it upon one heap at their Door. 'Tis indeed an eaſie thing for Satan to ſet the Sins of a Child of God *in order* before him, and to bring to mind *innumerable* Evils, eſpecially to one that is already awakened with a true diſcovery of the Corruption of Nature, and the Vileneſs of Sin. In which caſe, the more a Man conſiders, the more he will diſcover; and Sins thus ſet in *Battel Array*, (though they be not more than ordinary hainous, yet being many) have a very *diſmal appearance*. Satan's deſign in this, is to bring Men under the Affrightments which ſeem moſt proper to be raiſed from a perverſe Aſpect of the *third* Rank of Scriptures; which a little before I pointed at. For the Word of God ſpeaking of the Final Eſtate of Men, doth not only diſcover the hopeleſs condition of ſome as to Eternal Life from ſome particular *Acts* of Sin, but alſo the ſad Eſtate of others from the *manner*, *degrees*, and *frequency* of ſinning. The Heathens, becauſe they improved not the Knowledg of God, which they had from the Works of Creation, neither making thoſe *Inferences*, in matters relating to his Worſhip, which thoſe Diſcoveries did direct them unto; nor behaving themſelves in full compliance to thoſe Rules of *vertuous Converſation*, which they might have drawn from theſe Principles, and unto which in point of Gratitude, they were obliged, *Rom.* 1.21. *They glorified him not as God, neither were thankful*; therefore God *gave them up to a Reprobate mind.* And generally, concerning all others, the Scripture teacheth us, that a return to a prophane fleſhly Life, after ſome Reformation, hath a greater hazard in it than ordinary; as appears by the Parable, in *Mat.* 12.45. *Seven more wicked Spirits re-enter*; where *one* that was caſt out, is received again; and, *the laſt ſtate of that Man, is worſt than the firſt.* So alſo, 2 *Pet.* 2.20. To this purpoſe is that of *Solomon*, concerning the danger of continuance in ſin, after many Reproofs, *Prov.* 29.1. *He that being often reproved, hardneth his Neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy.*

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These and many such like Scriptures, Satan hath in readiness, which he plies home upon the Consciences of those that are troubled with the sense of Sin; telling them, *That their Hearts and Ways being continually evil, notwithstanding all the Courses that God hath taken to reclaim them; that they having so long neglected so great Salvation; or that after having seemed to entertain it, became more sinful than before.* (Which they will easily believe, because they are now more sensible of Sin, and more observant of their Miscarriages than formerly.) *There can be no question, but they are given up to vile Affections; and like the Ground that bears nothing but Briers and Thorns, they are rejected, and nigh unto Cursing, whose end is to be Burned.* The Wound that is made with this Weapon, is not so easily healed, as some others already mentioned; because (though Satan do *unduly* wrest these Passages, to such failures in the Children of God, as have *little or no affinity* with them, for they only speak, of falling into *open prophaneness with contumacy*, yet) they that have deep Convictions, accompanied with great Fears, do usually think that there are *none worse* than they are. And though they will grant, that some others have *more flagitious lives*, yet they think they have *Hearts* so desperately wicked, that they must needs be under as great hazards, as those whose Lives seem to be worse.

4. There is but one Argument more, that carries any probability of proof for everlasting Condemnation, and that is from an *hard and impenitent Heart.* How Satan will manage himself to make a Child of God believe, that he hath such an Heart; is our last observation relating to his *Sophistry.* And it is this, He unjustly aggravates the *discomposures* of the spirits of those that are troubled for Sin, and from thence draws his Arguments of irrecoverable Damnation; pleading that their Hearts are Seared, Hardned, uncapable of Repentance, and consequently of Heaven. That *final Impenitency* will conclude Damnation, is certain, and that some have been given up to such a *judicial* hardness long before Death, that they could not Repent; may not only be evidenced from the Threatning of God to that purpose, *Mat.* 13. *Make the Heart of this People fat*, &c. but also from the sad Instances of *Pharaoh*, (of whom 'tis said, that God hardned his Heart) and the *Jews* who were blinded, *Rom.* 11. 8. *God hath given them the Spirit of slumber, Eyes that they should not see, and Ears that they should not hear.* But still the Art lieth in this, How to make a Child of God

God believe that it's ſo with him. For this purpoſe he muſt take him at ſome advantage, he cannot terrifie him with this Argument at *all times*. While he is *acting* Repentance, with an *undisturbed* ſettled frame of Heart, 'tis not poſſible to make him believe he doth not, or cannot Repent; for this were to force him contrary to ſenſe and experience. But he muſt take him at ſome ſeaſon, which may, with ſome probability, admit of his Plea, and nothing is more proper for that deſign, than a *troubled Heart*; ſo that he hath in this caſe, *two* things to do.

1. He diſquiets the Soul into as great an *height* of Confuſion as he can: That, 2. When he hath *melted* it into heavineſs, and torn it into pieces, he may work upon its *distractions*.

There are many things that fall out in the caſe of great anxiety of Mind, that are capable of improvement for the accompliſhment of this deſign. As, 1. Diſtracting troubles bring the Heart under the *stupidity* of Amazement. Their thoughts are ſo broken and disjoynted, that they cannot unite them to a compoſed, ſettled reſolution in any thing, they can ſcarce *joyn* them together, to make out ſo much as might *spell* out their *distinct* deſires, or endeavours; they ſcarce know what they are *doing*, or what they *would* do. 2. They alſo *poyson* the thoughts with harſh apprehenſions againſt God. Great diſtreſſes make the thoughts ſometimes recoil againſt the Holy Lord, with unſeemly queſtionings of his Goodneſs and Compaſſion; and this puts Men into a bad *sullen* humour of untowardneſs, from whence (through Satan's improvement) ariſe the greateſt *plunges* of diſpair. 3. Moſt uſually in this caſe, the greateſt *endeavours* are Fruitleſs, and Diſſatisfactory. Satan (though he be no friend to Duty) doth *unseasonably* urge them to Repent, and Pray, but 'tis becauſe they cannot do either with any *satisfaction*, and then their Failures are matter of Argument againſt them. For if they reſolve to put themſelves upon a more ſevere courſe of Repentance, and accordingly begin to think of their ſins, to number them, or to aggravate them, they are uſually affrighted from the undertaking, by the hainous appearance of them; they cannot, they dare not think of them, the remoteſt glimps of them is terrible to an affrighted Conſcience: the *raising* of them up again in the *Memory* (like the riſing of a Ghoſt from the Grave) is far more aſtoniſhing, than the *first prospect* of them, after Commiſſion. So true is that of *Luther*, *If a Man could see Sin perfectly, it would*

would be a perfect Hell. If they set themselves to beg their Pardon by earnest Prayer, they are so *distracted* and confused in Prayer, that their Prayers please them not; they come off from the Duty *more* wounded, than when they began. Or if in any measure they overcome these difficulties, so that they do pray, and confess their Iniquities, then they urge and *force* a sorrow, or compunction upon themselves, but still to a greater *dissatisfaction*: For, it may be (and this usually happens in greater Distresses) they cannot *weep*, nor force a tear, or if they do, still they judg their sorrow is not *deep enough*, nor any way suitable to the greatness of their sin. 4. To all these Satan sometimes makes a further addition of trouble, by injecting *blasphemous* thoughts: Here he sets the Stock, with an intention to Graff upon it afterward. When all these things are thus in readiness, then comes he to set fire to the *Train*, and thus he endeavours to blow up the *Mine*. *Is not thy Heart hardned to everlasting destruction? How canst thou deny this? Art thou not grown stupid, and senseless of all the hazards that are before thee?* (Here he insists upon the amazement, and confusion of their Spirit; and 'tis very natural for those that are drunk with the Terrours of the Almighty, to think themselves *stupid*, because of the *distraction* of their thoughts. I have known several that have pleaded that very Argument to that purpose). Satan goes on: *What greater evidence can there be of an hardned Heart, than Impenitency? Thou canst not mourn enough? Thou hast not a tear for thy sins, though thou couldst weep enough formerly, upon every petty occasion; nay, thou canst not so much as pray for Pardon: Is not this, not only a Heart that doth not, but that cannot Repent? Besides* (saith he) *thou knowest the secret thoughts that thy Heart is privy to, do they not boyl up in thy Breast against God? Art thou not ready to tax him for dealing thus with thee? What is this untowardness, but desperate obdurateness?* And if with all these there be blaspemous Injections, then he tells him it is a clear case that he is judicially hardned; in that *he acts the part of the damned in Hell already.* By all, or some of these Deceits, the Devil doth often prevail so far with Men, that they conclude their Heart to be so obstinate, so stupid, that 'tis impossible that it should be ever mollified, or brought into a penitential frame, and consequently that there is no hope of their Salvation.

3. There is but one thing more, (besides the occasions which he takes, and the Arguments which he makes use of) relating

to Satan's method for the procurement of Spiritual Diſtreſſes, and that is his endeavour to ſtrengthen theſe Arguments, by the increaſe of *fears* in their Hearts.

What Satan can do in raiſing up miſgiving, tormenting Fears, hath been ſaid, and how ſerviceable this is to his deſign, I ſhall ſhew in a few Particulars, having only firſt noted this in the General; That as his deſign in theſe Diſtreſſes, is raiſed to expreſs his *utmoſt* height of Malice againſt Men, in puſhing them forward to the *greateſt* miſchief, by excluding them *totally* from the *loweſt* degree of the hope of Happineſs, and by perſwading them of the inevitable *certainty* of their eternal Miſery: So he doth endeavour by the *ſtrongeſt* impreſſions of Fear, to terrifie them to the *utmoſt* degree of affrightful Amazement, and conſequently the effects of that Fear are moſt powerful. For,

1. By this means, the Spirits of Men are *formed* and moulded into a frame moſt ſuitable for the belief and entertainment of the moſt diſmal impreſſions, that Satan can put upon them. For ſtrong fears (like Fire) do *aſſimulate* every thing to their own nature, making them naturally incline to receive the blackeſt, the moſt diſadvantagious interpretations of all things againſt themſelves; ſo that they have no capacity to put any other ſenſe upon what lies in their way, but the very worſt; hence are they poſſeſſed with no other thoughts, but that they are remedileſs Wretches, deſperate Miſcreants, utterly forſaken of God. They are brought into ſuch a woful *partiality* againſt their own Peace, that they cannot *judg* aright of any Accuſation, Plea, or Argument that Satan brings, for a proof of their Unhappineſs; but being fill'd with ſtrong prejudices of Hell, they think every *Sophiſm* a *ſtrong* Argument, every *Suppoſition* a *Truth*, and every *Accuſation*, *concluſive* of no leſs than their Eternal Damnation. Inſomuch that their Fears do more to *diſcomfit* them, than all Satan's Forces. A *dreadful ſound being in their Ears*, their ſtrength fails them at the appearance of any Oppoſition. As when fear comes upon an Army, they throw away their Weapons, and by an eaſie Victory, give their Backs ſometimes to an inconſiderable Enemy.

2. Men thus poſſeſſed with fear, do not only receive into their own Bowels every Weapon which Satan directs on purpoſe, to the wounding and ſlaying of their Hopes; but by a ſtrange kind of belief, they imagine every thing to be the *Sword of an*

Enemy. All they hear, or meet with, turns into Poyson to them, for they think every thing is against them; *Promises*, as well as *Threatnings*; *Mercies*, as well as *Judgments*; and that by all these (one as well as another). God (as with a *Flaming Sword*, turning every way) doth hinder their access to the *Tree of Life*. *Bilney* the Martyr (as *Latimer* in his Sermons reports of him) after his denial of the Truth, was under such horrours of Conscience, that his Friends were forced to stay with him Night and Day. No Comforts would serve: If any comfortable place of Scripture was offered to him, it was as *if a Man should cut him through with a Sword*. Nothing did him good, he thought that *all Scriptures made against him, and sounded to his Condemnation*. Neither is it so rare a thing for Fears to form the Imagination into such misshapen apprehensions, as that we should think such Instances to be only singular and unusual; but 'tis a *common* effect of Terrour, which few or none escape that are under Spiritual Distresses. The *blackness* of their thoughts, make the whole Scripture seem *black* to them: The unfit *medium* through which they look, doth discolour every Object. So that the *Book of Life* (as Mrs. *Kath. Bretterge*, in the like case, expressed her self, concerning the *Bible*) seems to be nothing else but a *Book of Death to them*.

Vid. *Her Story in* Clarks *Lives*.

3. From hence it follows, that no *Counsel*, or Advice, can take place with them. Excessive Fears do remove their Souls so far from Peace, that they will not believe there is any Hope for them, though it be *told them*. The most compassionate serious Admonitions of Friends, the strongest Arguments against Despair, the clearest discoveries of the Hopes that are before them, *&c.* effect but little; while they are spoken (it may be) they seem to relieve them a little, but the Comfort *abides* not with them, 'tis soon gone: Though they *cannot answer* the Arguments brought for them, yet they cannot *believe* them; as if their Souls were now deprived of all power to believe any thing for their good. Suitable to that Expression of *Spira*, in answer to his Friends that laboured to comfort him: *I would believe Comfort but cannot, I can believe nothing but what is contrary to my Comfort.* Nay, when they are told, that many others have been under the like dreadful apprehensions of everlasting Misery, who have at last been Comforted, (and by manifold Experience, we find, that it is *the greatest ease to distressed Souls, to hear (especially*

to

to speak with) *some that have been in the like case*; for this will oft administer *some hope*, that they also may *at last* be comforted, when the most comfortable *Promises* of the Scripture, are a *Terrour* to them). Yet this doth not effect the least ease for them sometimes, because some are so *wholly* possessed with *unalterable* Prejudice against themselves; that they think *none* are, or ever were *like* them. They compare themselves to *Judas* and *Cain*, and think their Iniquity to be aggravated by many Circumstances, far beyond the pitch of them. Thus *Spira* judged of himself; *I tell you* (saith he) *my case is mine own, 'tis singular, none like it.*

4. Though Fears make the Soul unactive to any thing of Comfort, because they wholly destroy its inclination, and alter its Byas to Hope; yet on the contrary, they make it very *nimble*, and active to pursue the conclusions of Misery, which they have helped to frame. For the *spring* of all the faculties of the Soul are bent that way. Hence it is, that those who are possessed with these Agonies, will eagerly plead against themselves, and with an admirable *subtilty*, will *frame* Arguments against their Peace, *coin* Distinctions, and make strange *Evasions* to escape the force of any Consolation that may be offered to them; their understandings are, as it were, *whetted* by their Fears to an unimaginable *quickness*. Who would not wonder to hear the Replies that some will give to the arguings of their Friends, that labour to comfort them? What strange answers *Spira* gave to those that pleaded with him? How easily he seemed to turn off the Example of *Peter* denying Christ, and those Scriptures that speak of *God's Love* to Mankind, &c. may be seen at large in his Narrative.

5. Fears, by a strange kind of *Witchcraft*, do not only make them believe that they *shall be* unhappy, but also will at last perswade them, that they *feel* and *see* their Misery already. How astonishingly doth *Spira* speak to this purpose? *I find, he daily more and more hardens me, I feel it.* Answerable to this (I remember) was the case of one who was long imprisoned in deep Distresses: He told me, that he verily believed that Scripture of *Isa. 66. 24.* was fulfilled upon him, *From one Sabbath to another, shall all Flesh come to worship before me, and*

 they

they shall go forth and look upon the Carcases of the Men that have transgressed against me: For their Worm shall not die, neither shall their Fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring to all Flesh. To his own *feeling*, he had the torments of Conscience, and the sense of Divine Wrath was as a burning Fire within him; and to his *apprehension*, every *look* from others, was a gazing upon him as *a monster* of Misery, *abhorred of all flesh.*

The nature of Spiritual Distresses, and Satan's method in working them, being explained, the last thing promised, is now to be opened. This is,

3. The *burthen* and weight of these Distresses, which how grievous, how intollerable it is, may be sufficiently seen in what hath been already said, and may be further evidenced in the Particulars following.

1. Those that are wounded with these *fiery Darts*, do at first usually *conceal* their Wound, and smother their Grief, being ashamed to declare it; partly, because some *great Transgression* (it may be) hath kindled all this Fire in their Bosoms, and this they are unwilling to declare to others. Partly, because they suspect (though no one remarkable Sin hath occasioned these Troubles) that the discovery of their Case, will expose them to the *Wonder* and *Censures* of all that shall hear of them. By this means the Fire burns with greater vehemency: Their Sore runs continually, and having none to speak a word in season for the least Relief, it becomes more painful and dangerous. As Bodily Distempers concealed by a *foolish modesty* from the Physician, increase the trouble and hazard of the Patient. Here have they many struglings within themselves, many attempts to overcome their Fears, but all in vain; they *sit alone* and *keep silence*, they flee the company and society of Men; they labour after *solitary* Places, where they may *weep* with freedom, (if their Tears be not yet dried up) or at least where they may pour out their *Complaints* against themselves, they *meditate* nothing but their Misery; they can fix their Thoughts upon nothing else; they *chatter as a Crane, or Swallow, they mourn as a Dove*; they are as a *Pelican in the Wilderness, as an Owl in the Desart*, but still without ease. They are but as those that are *snared in Dens, and Prison-Houses*; who the longer they lie there, have the *less*

Patience

Patience to bear the present Unhappiness, and the *less Hope* to be delivered from it.

2. When they are *tired* out with private Conflicts, and have no rest or intermission of Trouble, then at last they are forced *to Speak*; and having once begun to open their Troubles, they care not who knows it. If there be any heinous sin at the bottom, their Consciences are forced to *confess* it: Wickedness (that was once sweet in his Mouth) is *turned in his Bowels, it is the gall of Asps within him.* Thus doth God make Men to vomit up what they had swallowed down. Terrours chase away all Shame, they can now freely speak against their Sin, with the highest Aggravations. And if their Consciences have not an heinous Crime to accuse them of in *particular*, yet in the *general* they will judg and condemn themselves, as the *most stubborn*, sinful, or *hardned* Wretches, justly branded with indelible Characters of the Wrath of God. However the Distress becomes greater, if they *truly* accuse themselves of any particular Sin, that Vomit is not without a *violence* offered to Nature, which otherwise would cover its Shame. It cannot be done without Sickness, straining and torture; and when it is done, they take it for granted, that every one passeth the same judgment upon them, which they do upon themselves; And the *frequent* speaking doth *confirm* their Minds in their fearful expectations. For what Men do *accustom* themselves to assert, that they do more confidently *believe.* If they only complain of themselves in the general, with any intentions of procurement of Pity, (as is usual for the Distressed to do) yet while they cry out to others, *Is this nothing to you, all you that pass by? Is there any sorrow like to my sorrow?* &c. Still they think their *stroak is heavier than their groaning*; and their Cry to others, doth strongly fix this apprehension in themselves, that none can be more miserable than they. Thus are they brought to *Job*'s condition, *Job* 16. 6. *Though I speak, my Grief is not asswaged; and though I forbear, what am I eased?*

Job 20. 14, 15.

3. All this while they are under an *expressible sense* of Divine Wrath. *Heman* speaks his apprehensions of it, under the Similitude of the most hideous, and dismal, comfortless *Imprisonment*, Psal. 88. 6. *Thou hast laid me in the lowest Pit, in*

Dark-

Darkness, in the Deeps. David, in *Psal.* 116. 3. compares it to the *sorrows of Death*, and (the highest that humane thoughts can reach) the *pains of Hell: The sorrows of Death compass me, and the pains of Hell gat hold upon me; I found Trouble and Sorrow.* Well might they thus judg, all things considered, for Sin (that then lies heavy upon them) is a great Weight, a *Burthen* (saith *David*) *greater than I can bear*; especially when 'tis pressed on by an heavy Hand, *thy Hand presseth me sore.* Sin makes the greatest Wound, considering the Conscience, which is wounded by it, is the *tenderest* part, and of exquisite sense. (Hence the Grief of it is compared to the pain of a running fretting Ulcer, that distempers the whole Body: (*My Wounds stink and are corrupted; my Sore ran in the Night and ceased not*) Or to the pain of broken and shattered Bones. Psal. 38. 3. *There is no soundness in my Flesh, because of thine Anger; neither is there any rest in my Bones, because of my Sin.*) The *Instrument* also that makes the Wound is sharp, and cuts deep, (*'tis sharper than a two-edged Sword*) but when the Weapon is poysoned (and Satan hath a way to do that) then it burns, making painful malignant Inflammations. The Wrath of God expressed to the Conscience, brings the greatest Terrour; *Who knows the power of thine Anger?* Psal. 90. 11. It is impossible for the most *trembling* Conscience, or most *jealous* Fears, to go to the *utmost* bounds of it, neither can we apprehend any Torture greater; the Rack, Tortures, Fire, Gibbets, *&c.* are all nothing to it. Hence is it that those who were *afraid* of suffering for Truth, when by this means they were brought under these Distresses, could then be willing to suffer any *Torment* on the Body; yea, and heartily wish to suffer much more, so that these Tortures might be ended. Thus it was with *Bainham* Martyr, who in the publick Congregation bewailed his Abjuration of the Truth, and prayed all his Hearers *rather to Die by and by, than to do as he had done.* But that of *Spira*, seems almost beyond belief; thus speaks he to *Vergerius*: *If I could conceive but the least spark of Hope of a better Estate hereafter, I would not refuse to endure the most heavy weight of the Wrath of that Great God, yea, for twenty thousand Years, so that I might at length attain to the end of that Misery.*—— What dreadful Agonies were these,

Act and Mon. c. 8. p. 938.

that

that put him to these Wishes? But 'tis less wonder, if you observe what Apprehensions he had of his present Trouble, he judged it *worse* than *Hell* it self. (And if you would have a lively Exposition of *David*'s expression, *The pains of Hell*, &c. you may fetch it from this Instance); *My present Estate* (saith he) *I now account worse, than if my Soul (separated from my Body) were with* Judas *and the rest of the Damned; and therefore I desire rather to be there, than thus to live in the Body.* So that if you imagine a Man *crusht* under the greatest weight, *wounded* in the most tender parts, and those Wounds provoked by the sharpest *Corrosives*, his Bones all *disjoynted* and broken, *pined* also with hunger and thirst, and in that case put under the highest *Tortures*; yet you have but a very *shadow* of Divine Wrath: Add to all these (according to *Spira*'s wish) *twenty thousand Years of Hell* it self, yet all is nothing to that which a distressed Mind supposeth; while the word *Eternity* presents the Soul with the *total Sum* of utmost Misery all at once. Oh unexpressible burthen of a Distressed Mind! Who can understand it truly, but he that feels it? How terribly is the Mind of Man shaken with Terrours, as the *Wilderness by a mighty Wind!* which not only produceth violent Motions, but also hideous Noise, Murmur, and Howling.

4. This burthen upon the Mind, forceth the Tongue to vent its Sorrow in the saddest accent of most doleful *Outcrys*, their whole language is Lamentation; but when the pangs of their Agonies come upon them, (for their Distresses have their Fits) then they speak in the bitterness of their Souls. Oh! (said *Bainham*) *I would not for all the Worlds good, feel such an Hell in my Conscience again.* One (formerly mentioned) in these Distresses, crys out; *Wo, wo, wo! a woful, a wretched, a forsaken Woman!* It would surely have made a Man's Hair to stand upright for dread, to have heard *Spira* roaring out that terrible Sentence: *How dreadful is it to fall into the hands of the Living God?* Or to have heard his Reply to him that told of his being at *Venice, O cursed Day!* (saith he) *O cursed Day! O that I had never gone thither, would God I had then died!* &c. The like Out-crys had *David* often, *Psal.* 22. 1. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken*

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ken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my Roaring? And *Heman*, Psal. 88. 14. *Lord, why castest thou off my Soul, why hidest thou thy Face from me?* 'Tis true, *David*'s and *Heman*'s words, have a better Complexion than those others last mentioned, but their disquiet of Heart seems (at sometimes) to have urged their Expressions with impetuous violence; as those Passages seem to say, *Psal.* 38. 8. *I have Roared by reason of the disquietness of my Heart.* Psal. 32. 3. *My Bones waxed old, through my Roaring all the Day long.* Job 3. 24. *My Roarings are poured out like Water.* If their Lamentations were turned into *Roarings*, and those Roarings were like the breaking in of a *Flood*, and that Flood of so *long* continuance, that it *dried* up the Marrow of the Bones, we may safely imagine, that they were not so much at leasure to *order* their words, but that their Tongues might speak in that *Dialect* which is proper to Astonishment, and Distress.

5. Though the Mind be the principal seat of these Troubles, yet the *Body* cannot be exempted from a *Copartnership* in these Sorrows. Notwithstanding this is so far from abating the Trouble, that it increaseth it by a *Circulation.* The pains of the Body, contracted by the trouble of the Mind, are communicated again to the Fountain from whence they came, and *reciprocally* augment the disquiet of the Mind. The Body is weakned, their *strength poured out like Water*; they are *withered like Grass*; pined as *a Skin*, become as *a Bottle in the smoak:* Thus *David* frequently complains, *Psal.* 22. 14. he describes himself as reduced to a *Skeliton: I am poured out like Water, and all my Bones are out of joynt: My Heart is like Wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels; my strength is dried up like a Potsherd, my tongue cleaveth to my Jaws, and thou hast brought me to the dust of Death.* Neither is this his peculiar case, but the common effect of Spiritual Distresses, *Psal.* 39. 11. *When thou with Rebukes dost correct Man for Iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a Moth.*

6. Being thus distressed for their Souls, they cast off *all care* of their Bodies, Estates, Families, and all their outward Concerns whatsoever. And no wonder, for being perswaded that they have made *Shipwrack* of their Souls, they judg the rest are not *worth the saving.*

7. Giving

7. Giving all for loſt, they uſually caſt about for ſome *eaſe* to their Minds, by ſeeking after the *lower* degrees of Miſery, hearing, or ſuppoſing that all are not tormented alike, they endeavour to perſwade themſelves of a *Cooler Hell.* This if they could reach it, were but poor Comfort, and little to their Satisfaction; but as poor as it is, it is uſually denied to them, for while they judg themſelves to be the *greateſt Sinners*, they cannot but adjudg themſelves to the *greateſt Torments*: And theſe Endeavours being fruſtrated, they return back to themſelves, (as now hopeleſs of the leaſt eaſe) worſe than before. Now they fix themſelves upon the *deep* contemplations of their Miſery: *Oh* (think they) *how great had our Happineſs been, if we had been made Toads, Serpents, Worms, or any thing but Men! For then ſhould we never have known this Unhappineſs*; *and this begets a thouſand vain wiſhes. Oh that we had never been born! Or that Death could annihilate us! Or that as ſoon as we had been born, we had died!* (As *Job* ſpeaks) Job 3. 11, 12. *Why died I not from the Womb? Why did I not give up the ghoſt, when I came out of the belly?*) *For then had we not contracted ſo much Guilt. Or that the Mountains and Hills could fall upon us, and cover us from the Face of our Judge.*

8. When all their Hopes are thus daſhed, and (like a Ship-wracked-Man on a Plank) they are ſtill knocked down with new Waves, all their endeavours being ſtill fruſtrated, they ſeem to themſelves to be able to hold out no longer; then they give over all further *Enquiries*, and the *uſe of Means*, they refuſe to Pray, Read, Hear. They percieve (as *Spira* ſaid) *that they pray to their own Condemnation*; and that all is to no purpoſe. They are *weary of their Groanings*, Pſal. 6. 6. *Their Eyes fail with looking up*; their *Knees are feeble*, their Hands hang down. And as *Heman*, Pſal. 88. 4, 5. *They count themſelves with thoſe that go down to the Pit, free among the Dead, like the ſlain that lie in the Grove*, whom God *remembreth no more.* Thus they lie down under their Burthen, and while they find it ſo hard to be born, 'tis uſual for them to come to the utmoſt point of *Deſperateneſs.* (Satan ſuggeſting and forwarding them.) Sometimes they open their Mouths with complaints againſt God, and blaſpheme. And (as the laſt part of the

Tragedy) being weary of themselves, they seek to put an end to their present *Misery*, by putting an end to their *Lives*.

I have presented you with Satan's Stratagems, against the *Peace* of God's Children: the Remedies against these and other Subtilties of our grand Enemy, I shall not offer you, because many others have done that already, to whose Writings I must refer you. Some *principal* Directions I have pointed at in the way, and in the General have done this for the help of the Tempted, that I have endeavoured to shew them the *Methods* of the Tempter, which is no *small help to preserve* Men from being thus imposed upon, and to *recover* out of his Snare those that are. 'Tis a great preservative from Sickness, and no mean advantage to the Cure, to have a discovery of the Disease, and the Causes of it. I shall conclude these Discoveries with a Caution or two.

1. Let none think worse of the *serious Practice* of holy strictness in Religion, because these Spiritual Distresses do sometimes befal those that are conscientiously careful in the Ways of God, while the prophane and negligent Professors, are strangers to such Trials. These Troubles are indeed very sad; but a senseless, careless State is *far worse*: these Troubles often *end very Comfortably*, whereas the other end (except God make them sensible, by Conviction of their sin and danger) in that *real Misery*, the fears whereof occasion these Sorrows to God's Children. And the danger of Spiritual *Troubles* is not so great as is that of an *hardned* Heart, (nay, God frequently makes use of them to prevent eternal Ruine) *for one* that goes *roaring* to the Pit, there are *thousands* that go *laughing* to Hell.

2. Let none *slight*, or scoff at these Tremendous Judgments. 'Tis too common with Men, either to ascribe Spiritual Troubles to *Melancholy*, as if none were ever thus concerned, but such, as by too much seriousness in Religion, are *become Mad*, (a fair pretence for Carelessness) or to a whining *Dissimulation:* To the former I have said something before, and as for the latter, I shall only reply in the words of *Spira*, to one that objected Hypocrisie to him: *I am a Cast-away, a Vessel of Wrath, yet dare you call it Dissembling and Frenzy, and can mock*

at the formidable example of the heavy Wrath of God, that ſhould teach you Fear and Terrour? But 'tis natural to the Fleſh to ſpeak (either out of malice or ignorance) perverſly of the Work of God.

3. *Let nóne be afraid of this* Goliah, let no Man's heart faint becauſe of him. A fear of *caution* and diligence to avoid his Snares, is a neceſſary Duty, (*Be ſober, be vigilant, becauſe your adverſary the Devil,* &c.) but a *diſcouraging* diſtruſtful Fear, is a diſhonourable *reflection* upon God's Power and Promiſes to help us, and upon the Captain of our Salvation, who goeth out before us: Let us hold on in the practice of Holineſs, and not be afraid. The God of Peace ſhall tread down Satan under our feet ſhortly. *Amen.*